

MODERN LANGUAGE QUARTERLY

December, 1960

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SHERIDAN'S LITERARY DEBT *THE RIVALS* AND HUMPHRY CLINKER

By SAILENDRA KUMAR SEN

Sheridan's critics have been very unkind to him. We hope we will not be accused in turn of being unkind to the critics, but some of them appear to have taken positive pleasure in proving that Sheridan's chief characteristic as a playwright lay in his being a plagiarist. The result of their research into literary genealogy has been to endow each important character in *The Rivals* with a strangely assorted gallery of family portraits, some of the ancestors hailing from Latin comedy, Jonson, Molière, and Congreve, others from Shakespeare's romantic comedy, Steele's sentimental plays, and Fielding's and Smollett's novels.

It is our contention that this business of finding originals for the characters in *The Rivals* has been overdone and that it has gone on with complete inattention to the basic principles on which the characters are conceived. Like Jonson's comedies of humors and the Restoration comedies of manners, *The Rivals* and *The School for Scandal* are, with all their individual differences, English examples of classical comedy. In classical comedy the characters are conceived as types: this is not due to a failure to visualize them as individuals, but results from steady adherence to what the ends of comedy are conceived to be. It is useful to remember what Bergson, the greatest theorist of this type of comedy, has to say:

The comic character is a *type*. . . . Indeed, comedy not only offers us general types, but it is, in our opinion, the *only* art which aims at generality, so that when one has noted this to be its objective, one has said what comedy is and what comedy alone can be.

And again, "The generality here resides in the nature of the work."¹

Once the basic fact is recognized that this class of comedy deals with generalized types, the charge of plagiarism falls to the ground. It is to no purpose to tell us that a character in Molière can be recognized in a play of Congreve, or that a character of Congreve can be recognized in a play of Sheridan. Types will repeat themselves, inevitably. The tyrannical but affectionate father, the absurdly jealous lover, the young lady in love with the idea of romantic love, the pert and witty servant—all will be there; if not, there will be other types

¹ Henri Bergson, *Le Rire*, soixante-septième édition (Paris, 1946). "Le personnage comique est un *type*" (p. 113); "Non seulement, en effet, la comédie nous présente des types généraux, mais c'est, à notre avis, le *seul* de tous les arts qui vise au général, de sorte que lorsqu'une fois on lui a assigné ce but, on a dit ce qu'elle est, et ce que le reste ne peut pas être" (p. 114); "Ici la généralité est dans l'œuvre même" (p. 125).

equally familiar. The accusation that a playwright borrowed the idea of a character from someone else can be leveled against him when the character in question is a clearly recognized individual, not when he is a generalized type.

If it is still asked why the charge is more often brought against Sheridan than against Jonson, Congreve, or even Shadwell, or any other important or unimportant practitioner of classical comedy, the answer is simple. Sheridan has the appearance of having borrowed from those who wrote before him. By virtue of the fact that his plays are the last notable examples of classical comedy in English, they seem more open to the charge of plagiarism than those of any other playwright; the character types had already made so many appearances that we are inclined to be suspicious, though in a sense he could not help reintroducing them. If he had drawn other types than the ones he actually gives us, it would have been as easy to show that they were borrowed.

In finding originals for Sheridan's characters, critics have not restricted themselves to the different kinds of classical comedy dealing in generalized types, but have strayed into Shakespeare, Fielding, and Smollett, who give us living individuals. This is due to an error which can be explained. It is by disengaging what is truly general from all elements of character which particularize that a type is made, and as such it will not be difficult to find an individual with supposed resemblance with the type, even though the individual and the type actually exist on different planes of reality. A character which is a type is in an unfortunate predicament, as it can never escape from the allegation that it is secondary; and its originals may be "traced," if it pleases us to do so, not only among characters which are themselves types, but among characters which are complete individuals.

The only character in *The Rivals* in respect of which the charge of plagiarism can be taken to have been established is Mrs. Malaprop, some of whose celebrated word blunders have been misappropriated from Mrs. Tryfort, a character in Sheridan's mother's comedy, *A Journey to Bath*. The exact verbal correspondences constitute a kind of evidence that cannot be refuted. But Mrs. Malaprop is not a type. This is not to repeat the commonplace of criticism that she is too consistently and methodically absurd to be true to life, though this is not to deny either that like all commonplaces it embodies an important truth. She is a provincial woman who is desperately trying to acquire respectability, and while it is easy to conceive that women in her position and with her pretensions will bungle words, they will not commit those blunders so consistently and with such delightful results. But she is also not true to type; and this for the reason that her particular kind of absurdity, which requires further analysis, makes it difficult to think that she suggests any one but herself (or Mrs. Tryfort).

This woman who specializes in the "nice derangement" of words

is, strangely enough, proficient in the use of language, barring this particular oddity or failing. She ludicrously fails with every second word, but she has an exact knowledge of the principles of English syntax and appears to have mastered the difficult art of sentence construction; and in her speeches one has only to restore the right words to their places to see that she can express herself not only clearly, but adequately.

It is by virtue of this oddity that Mrs. Malaprop constitutes a class by herself. The point commonly made that she misapplies words, while some other characters in fiction and drama misspell or mispronounce words, is correct; but it does not completely define her peculiarity, for there are characters other than Mrs. Malaprop who misapply words. And the oddity is indeed a very singular one: one does not understand how she can combine a feeling for the form of the sentence and even the paragraph with her talent for the systematic perversion of the vocabulary. She would have been worth listening to if only the words she has in mind were not shoved out by others which have no business to turn up at the moment. Further, how she can always have the right word in mind and almost always use the wrong word is difficult to explain. It all seems very inconsistent. We can understand Dogberry and Launcelot who pitifully bungle both words and sentences, so that the words are not only often the wrong words in their place, but occur in the most ludicrous disorder; we can understand Tabitha Bramble and Winnifred Jenkins, who misuse as well as misspell words; we can understand Mrs. Plyant, who misuses a word only now and then, but otherwise speaks correctly; but we cannot understand Mrs. Malaprop.

The point can bear a little elaboration. A character can be a type and yet fail to be true to life because of exaggerated presentation of intellectual or moral traits or of habits of speech and manners in themselves not improbable. This is precisely what happens to the characters in classical comedy—to Sheridan's own characters; characters which are generalized types, mere abstractions of traits and manners, existing not in the three dimensions of life, but in the two dimensions of convention. The character of Mrs. Malaprop becomes grossly unrealistic through exaggerated presentation, but when we have said that, we still have only a partial notion of the character. The basic idea of the character is unsound, other considerations apart.

Hence it is that we say that Mrs. Malaprop is not even a type; for types, as we find them in classical comedy, embody real traits and become untrue to life only through a mode of character presentation which concentrates on a selected trait and magnifies it beyond the limits of truth. It is surely worth emphasizing that no character who exhibits her particular eccentricity had appeared before in any work except Mrs. Sheridan's comedy. Mrs. Sheridan is to be credited with the idea of a very singular character, and the idea was borrowed by her son.

The position, then, is that, since Sheridan's characters are types (in the sense understood in classical comedy), it is to misunderstand them to say that they have been borrowed. That one character in *The Rivals*—Mrs. Malaprop—who is not a type, was in fact borrowed, proves rather than disproves our proposition.

It is our second proposition that while the charge of plagiarism is not proved by any of the characters in *The Rivals* (of course, with the exception of Mrs. Malaprop), there is nevertheless one item of debt which has not been noticed. After all we have said, it seems incongruous that we should come forward with fresh information about Sheridan's literary debt; but it is offered for what it is worth.

The debt is in respect to some of the situations in *The Rivals*; the creditor is Smollett; and the correspondences are sometimes indeed very close. Lydia Languish's circulating library had a copy of *Humphry Clinker*, and it seems that Sheridan's personal library was not without it.²

Humphry Clinker, like many other works, has often been mentioned in connection with *The Rivals*. But in an objective study of the problem, it has to be borne in mind that not only should we refrain from discovering "originals" for Sheridan's characters, but that, to prove plagiarism or even "influence," we must find significant parallels in situation. The criterion of significance is that the situations which are compared must not be stock situations, as could occur naturally to any writer; they must have some elements or features which make them distinctive, features which they have yet in common.

(1) The diverting situation of aunt or niece being involved in an affair with the same man is common to *The Rivals* and *Humphry Clinker*. The situation in *The Rivals* will easily be recalled: Sir Lucius has set his heart on young Lydia Languish (who loves Captain Absolute), while the middle-aged Mrs. Malaprop has marked out Sir Lucius for her next husband. As the parallel situation in *Humphry Clinker* has escaped unnoticed, it will be necessary to describe it in somewhat greater detail. Lydia Melford has conquered the heart of Barton, her brother Jeremy's "old friend,"³ but does not reciprocate the affection, as she loves another man whose name is Wilson. Lydia's aunt, Tabitha Bramble, who is described as "a maiden of forty-five, exceeding starched, vain, and ridiculous,"⁴ and whose one avocation in the novel is that of getting a husband, sees her opportunity and concentrates for the moment on Barton: "she seems to have undertaken the siege of Barton's heart, and carries on her approaches in such a desperate manner, that I don't know whether he will not be

² For *The Rivals*, I have used George H. Nettleton's text, *Major Dramas of Richard Brinsley Sheridan* (Boston, 1906); for *Humphry Clinker*, Robert Anderson's edition of *Miscellaneous Works of Tobias Smollett* (Edinburgh, 1811), VI, and the Modern Library edition (New York, 1929) of the novel.

³ Jeremy's letter, dated June 2.

⁴ Jeremy's letter, dated April 2.

obliged to capitulate."⁵ The conclusion of the affair is not the same in the play as in the novel; that, however, is a different matter.

Incidentally, it may be noted that Tabitha Bramble, in her indefatigable search for a husband, happens once to have in contemplation an Irish adventurer, as Mrs. Malaprop has, and also carries on a sentimental correspondence with him.⁶ This is Sir Ulic Mackilligut, an Irish baronet of sixty-five, who has mistakenly supposed that Tabitha has a large fortune and would marry her for it. When he learns the truth, he quietly disappears from Tabitha's life and from the novel.

(2) In *The Rivals*, Acres, who says that he is in "a most devouring rage" (IV.i), sends a written challenge to a rival in love; but when he finds that the fight will actually come off, he feels his valor "oozing out as it were at the palms of [his] hands" (V.iii). In the end, he finds reasons why the fight cannot take place, and he says that he will bear his "disappointment like a Christian" (V.iii).

This situation has a parallel in the adventure of George Prankley with Tom Eastgate in *Humphry Clinker* (Jeremy's letter, dated May 17). For reasons into which we need not enter, Prankley, with foolish bravado, asks Eastgate to meet him with pistols at an appointed place at six o'clock the following morning. To his consternation, he finds that Eastgate takes him at his word and calls at his place to take him out to the fields for the promised duel. "In their progress up the hill, Prankley often eyed the parson, in hopes of perceiving some reluctance in his countenance; but as no such marks appeared, he attempted to intimidate him by word of mouth." Not being successful in this, he then expostulated that "it ill became a clergyman to be concerned in quarrels and bloodshed." As this also had no effect on the "clergyman" Eastgate, Prankley "took his distance, and endeavoured to prime; but his hand shook with such violence, that he found this operation impracticable." And when Eastgate advanced toward him, offering "his assistance," Prankley, "exceedingly alarmed," begged that "the action might be deferred till next day, as he had not settled his affairs. 'I ha'n't made my will', (said he); 'my sisters are not provided for; and I just now recollect an old promise, which my conscience tells me I ought to perform. . . .'"

⁵ Jeremy's letter, dated June 2.

⁶ *The Rivals*, I.ii, and Matthew Bramble's letter, dated April 28.

⁷ C. O. Parsons, in his article "Smollett's Influence on Sheridan's *The Rivals*," *N&Q* (Jan. 21, 1933), insists that Lydia Languish is "like" Lydia Melford. This "likeness" had been noted in Sheridan criticism before, and Sir Anthony Absolute had previously been compared to Matthew Bramble and Mrs. Malaprop to Tabitha Bramble. It is our case that such "likenesses" (even assuming they exist) should not be pressed, since Sheridan's characters are types. Parsons notes that "duels are fought over both Lydias" and that both are "addressed by lovers of some rank and fortune under assumed names and in rather humble characters." Could it be suggested that these are among the common and typical situations in the comedies of the Restoration and the eighteenth century? In

Prankley's courage, like Acres', stays with him as long as he thinks that his threats will intimidate his opponent, and it deserts him the moment he finds that the opponent means business. Though they find reasons why they cannot fight—and thus save their lives—they fail conspicuously to save their reputations; and not only is their conduct comical, but the comedy is of exactly the same sort.

(3) In *The Rivals* Sir Lucius believes that he is paying court to Lydia and that Lydia reciprocates the affection. Under the circumstances, he supposes that Captain Absolute, by paying court to the same lady without respecting Sir Lucius' precedence, has offered an affront to him, and to avenge it, he challenges Absolute to a duel. Absolute accepts the challenge. Absolute does not know that Sir Lucius fancies him to be his rival, and Sir Lucius does not know that he has made a mistake, that he has actually been paying court to Mrs. Malaprop. However, these points are not cleared; "the quarrel is a very pretty quarrel as it stands—we should only spoil it, by trying to explain it" (IV.iii).

This recalls to mind an incident in *Humphry Clinker*—"an incident which I believe you will own to be very surprising," writes Jeremy to a friend in a letter dated October 4.⁸ Jeremy believes that he has reason to feel affronted by the conduct of Wilson, who (so he thinks) has dishonest intentions about his sister Lydia. Having been told that this Wilson is staying at a neighboring inn (the Red Lion), he sends a messenger with a note, asking Wilson to meet him, with a case of pistols, in half an hour at a specified place. He does not state the reason, and he does not subscribe the note. The gentleman complies with his request. He appears, wrapped in a big coat and with "a laced hat flapped over his eyes." When he throws off his coat and hat to take up his position, he is seen not to be Wilson. Jeremy, confounded, has to explain to him that he is not the man he "expected to meet," upon which the gentleman says that "*it might be so*; that he had received a slip of paper directed to Mr. Wilson, requesting him to come hither; and that, as there was no other in the place of that name, he naturally concluded the note was intended for him, and him only." The gentleman who accepts the challenge is actually a Wilson, while Lydia's lover is not, but has assumed the name for several reasons, and he is not staying at the Red Lion. All this, how-

comedies of intrigue, it was the rule, not the exception, to court the mistress under an assumed name; and to base on it an inference about influence is about as just as to allege in discussions of Elizabethan comedy that the typical situation of the girl disguised as a boy was pilfered by this or that playwright from this or that contemporary. It is true that in Sheridan's play, as in Smollett's novel, "a relative of one of the combatants interferes [in the duel] before any injury is done," but it is also true that in fiction and drama (perhaps also in life) intervention was not only common, but usually—and very naturally—came from a relative or friend. I find, however, that Parsons has compared the adventures of Acres and Prankley, though he does not work out the parallel, and dismisses the matter in one sentence. And though significant, this particular case of correspondence is perhaps not as significant as some others. See *infra*, p. 297.

⁸ This "incident" is not the duel referred to by Parsons.

ever, is another story. Meanwhile, "I expressed my surprize," writes Jeremy, referring to the adventure, "that he, who was a stranger to me and my concerns, should give me such a rendezvous, without taking the trouble to demand a previous explanation."

Before we hear Mr. Wilson's reasons, we shall recall from *The Rivals* that, when Absolute's father appears just on time to stop the duel, the following conversation between him and Absolute takes place:

SIR ANTHONY ABSOLUTE: Put up, Jack, put up, or I shall be in a frenzy—how came you in a duel, Sir?

ABSOLUTE: Faith, Sir, that gentleman can tell you better than I; 'twas he call'd on me, and you know, Sir, I serve his Majesty.

SIR ANTH.: Here's a pretty fellow; I catch him going to cut a man's throat, and he tells me he serves his Majesty!—Zounds! sirrah, then how durst you draw the King's sword against one of his subjects?

ABS.: Sir! I tell you, that gentleman called me out, without explaining his reasons. (V.iii)

Wilson's reasons for accepting the challenge are that "having had the honour to serve his majesty, he thought he could not decently decline any invitation of this kind, from what quarter soever it might come."

If Sir Anthony had read *Humphry Clinker*, he would have known a precedent for entering a quarrel without "trying to explain it"; he would also have remembered the other "pretty fellow" who was caught when "going to cut a man's throat" and merely answered that "he serves his Majesty."⁹

The question now is: whether the parallels we have drawn attention to in this essay prove that Sheridan borrowed ideas from Smollett. Two minds can conceive a situation independently, especially if the situation is a typical one; the deflation of a bully or a braggart—whatever name he bears, Prankley or Acres—is a typical situation, but in their case is saved from being altogether typical by certain details of their particular demeanors. It would be easy to pick from a play or a novel an isolated passage which could be paralleled in another writer, almost as easy to find a parallel situation; but it would be rash from this to draw conclusions. The case is different, however, when several interesting situations are found to be common to two works of fiction. The simple law of probability suggests a relationship in such a case.

It would be an extraordinary coincidence, indeed, if all three situations we have enumerated occurred to a mind uninfluenced by *Humphry Clinker*, particularly because two of them are not in any sense among the typical and common situations of comedy. To recall what

⁹ We should not be misunderstood. It is one thing greatly to find quarrel in a straw, like Fortinbras; another thing to enter into a quarrel in the spirit of a braggart; yet another thing for absolutely honorable and sensible persons (Smollett's Wilson, Sheridan's Absolute) to enter into a quarrel without knowing what it is about. The conduct of these two is unusual; and it is because this is so that the coincidence is interesting.

we have in one: aunt, niece, the triangle being completed in the play by the Irish adventurer, in the novel by an English squire; the novel has the Irish adventurer, too, who at one time establishes his place in the affections of the aunt, though not in the triangle. The other situation, that of people entering into a quarrel without knowing the cause of it—"the quarrel is a very pretty quarrel as it stands—we should only spoil it, by trying to explain it"—will be admitted to be indeed very singular. That this situation is found in the work of one of the most reputable novelists of the time, and that it reappears in a play written only four years later, can hardly be regarded as unrelated events.

But it is on the aggregate evidence of the three separate cases of interesting correspondences in situation that we let the argument rest.¹⁰ Bearing this in mind, we shall proceed to consider the "evidence" of a passage in Act IV, Scene ii, of *The Rivals*, in which Mrs. Malaprop gives her impressions of Captain Absolute.

I protest, when I saw him, I thought of what Hamlet says in the play:—"Hesperian curls—the front of *Job* himself!—An eye, like March, to threaten at command!—A Station, like Harry Mercury, new—" Something about kissing—on a hill—however, the similitude struck me directly.

Excellently diverting as this is, *Humphry Clinker* had already provided an instance of the perpetration of malapropisms upon the play *Hamlet*. (Allowance should be made for the use of Mrs. Malaprop's name to describe the word blunders which uneducated or half-educated people in fiction and actual life had always made, and before the world had heard of her, but not on her scale nor with her peculiar genius for corrupting the vocabulary—corrupting it abominably—while retaining a perfect control of the sentence.¹¹) Tabitha Bramble, on meeting the celebrated actor Quin, says:

I was once vastly entertained with your playing the Ghost of Gimlet at Drury-lane, when you rose up through the stage, with a white face and red eyes, and spoke of *quails upon the frightful porcofine*—Do, pray, spout a little the Ghost of Gimlet.¹²

It does not prove anything that *Hamlet* should suffer the same fate in the hands of two middle-aged ladies; but when taken with the highly suspicious circumstances of there being several parallel situations in the two works where this is found to happen, the fact acquires significance. It then, and only then, begins to seem probable that the idea that Mrs. Malaprop could be made to try her talent for derange-

¹⁰ If to fight a duel for the lady-love and to court her under an assumed name are, as situations, not the commonplaces of Restoration and eighteenth-century comedy, these two instances of correspondence between the play and the novel—noted by Parsons—strengthen our contention. But we believe we should ignore them.

¹¹ See *supra*, pp. 292-93.

¹² Jeremy's letter, dated April 30.

ment of epithets on a play made familiar to common people by Quin and Garrick occurred to Sheridan in the "starts of recollection" of an elder writer—to use Sheridan's own phrase.

If the principles suggested in this essay for testing the derivation of Sheridan's situations and characters have any validity, then *Humphry Clinker* and *A Journey to Bath* are left as the only works, among scores of claimants, whose pretensions can be proved or are worth serious consideration.

Sheridan, as is indeed too well known, stoutly repudiates in the preface the charge of plagiarism. It is therefore worth while to remember that it somehow happens that he can there think only of the possibility of being influenced by playwrights. This is proved by the fact that the one argument he employs in self-defense is that he is "by no means conversant with plays in general, either in reading or at the theatre." A hint for the character of Mrs. Malaprop undoubtedly came from his mother's play, *A Journey to Bath*, but this appears to be the whole extent of Sheridan's indebtedness to playwrights. And he does not say that he has not read any play; also, he may have thought public acknowledgment of a family debt—for so it was—unnecessary, particularly because the play *A Journey to Bath*, left unfinished, was not to get into print.

We hasten to reject the suggestion made by some of his biographers and critics that the statement in the preface that his acquaintance with dramatic literature was too meager to permit unauthorized uses of it is a half-truth. At the same time, there remains the possibility that he may have been influenced by a novelist. Certainly, it is not ruled out by anything he tells us in the preface, as can be found by turning to it for a moment. In one place, indeed, he candidly admits that the reading of literature is attended with a disadvantage: "Faded ideas float in the fancy like half-forgotten dreams; and the imagination in its fullest enjoyments becomes suspicious of its offspring, and doubts whether it has created or adopted." He does not acknowledge any specific debt, possibly because he was not conscious of one. We like to think that the situations in *Humphry Clinker*, to which attention has been drawn, had become "faded ideas" floating in his fancy, which were bodied forth again in *The Rivals*, without awareness of their derivative character.

If this is what actually happened, the fact of his being interested in certain ideas preëxisting in his mind partially accounts for the grave structural weakness from which the play suffers. The principal plot gives to the play its title: the rivals for Lydia's love being Captain Absolute and Ensign Beverley, who are, however, one and the same person. The situation is complicated by Absolute's father's insistence that he will choose his son's bride (II.i); but as early as the opening of the third act, when two-thirds of the play remain to be gone through, Absolute learns that his father's choice is Lydia, and the complication is resolved (III.i). It remains now to reconcile

Lydia to the fact that Absolute is Beverley, in order to bring about a complete resolution of his difficulties.

After Act III, Scene i, one wonders what matter can fill three whole acts of the play. There are other rivals for Lydia's love, Acres and Sir Lucius, and their affairs and entanglements constitute the secondary elements of the plot, along with the Faulkland-Julia story. After Act III, Scene i, the play moves for most of the time in the secondary sectors of the plot. It is so busy with Acres, Sir Lucius, Faulkland, and Julia that only now and then can it spare time for Lydia and Absolute. People who should matter less to the play appropriate the bigger share of attention. The resolution of the principal action proceeds very slowly and with many interruptions; and, in spite of a succession of amusing situations and the brilliant dialogue, the reader tires and feels that *The Rivals*, even in its present version, is a long play. In Faulkland, Sheridan caricatures the "man of sentiment," and his interest in the campaign he led with Goldsmith against sentimental comedy may have prevailed upon him to give the character leisure to disport itself. But we cannot wait to consider the Faulkland-Julia story, which does not fall within the scope of this essay, and which, in any case, gives only part of the explanation of the time lost in the denouement.

The situations in the play, for which we have found parallels in *Humphry Clinker*, principally involve Acres and Sir Lucius, and further, these situations are developed—except for occasional early hints—in the last three acts. To be precise, one involves Lydia (in a passive role, for she does not even know that she is concerned), Mrs. Malaprop, and Sir Lucius; the second: Acres, Sir Lucius, and only indirectly Captain Absolute; the third: Sir Lucius and Captain Absolute. *The Rivals* has a painfully slow denouement. "Faded ideas" in the mind, whose blandishments the young playwright could not resist, were, we believe, admitted into the plot, affecting its structural proportions; for the result of having to find room for them is that, after the denouement has started, the plot meanders for long periods in the secondary sectors, and the denouement is retarded. We have tried to suggest where these "faded ideas" came from; but it is to be regretted, in spite of their contributions of humor and fun, that they had a free passage into the play, for they interfered, as it seems, with the ordered evolution of the plot.

Presidency College, Calcutta

THE PENCIL AND THE HARP OF WILLIAM LISLE BOWLES

By GEORGE S. FAYEN, JR.

Early in 1837, while narrating the more memorable events of his childhood in *Scenes and Shadows of Days Departed*, William Lisle Bowles turned back in his recollection to a spring day in 1769 and the journey which he had made with his parents from Buckinghamshire to their new home at Uphill on the Severn Sea. The circumstances that stood out in Bowles's memory indicate his youthful sensitivity to sound and scenery: the pealing bells of Redcliff Church in Bristol, so enthralling that he wandered away from his family and nearly was left behind by their departing coach, and the view from Brockley-Coombe, a height near Bristol overlooking the Severn estuary.

Not a word was said on the road till we arrived there, when my father took me by the hand, and led me, in silence, up the picturesque and romantic road which leads to the top of the hill, from whence a long and magnificent extent of scenery, with the vast Severn sweeping onward, in morning light, was seen. . . . The impression of this beautiful scene remains with me still, and I believe, from this circumstance, I owe my earliest associations of poetry with picturesque scenery.¹

Both of these boyhood incidents are mentioned in Bowles's later work,² and their appeal to eye and ear shows what he believed to be the essential components of his poetic sensibility. "The writer inherited from his father a love of landscape scenery, as of music, particularly sacred music, from his mother."³ Within the variety of Bowles's poetry (including sonnets, odes, ballads, elegies, hymns, epitaphs, and lengthy efforts in blank verse and heroic couplets dealing with such diverse topics as Biblical revelation and South American adventures), there are two constantly recurring elements: picturesque landscape as the scene of narrative action or meditation, and the harp as a metaphor for the irregular harmonies of human emotions. At one time (1828) Bowles asserted that these two modes of poetic creation could not cooperate within the same poem.

The feelings of the heart naturally associate themselves with the idea of the tones of the supposed poetical harp; but external scenes are the province of the pencil, for the harp cannot paint woods and hills, and therefore, in almost all

¹ *Scenes and Shadows of Days Departed* (London, 1837), p. xxi; hereafter cited as *Scenes and Shadows*.

² The second half of "The Bells, Ostend" refers to Bowles's recollection of Redcliff Church, and he recorded his first impression of the sound of the sea in "Banwell Hill," Part Second, lines 9-19. *Poetical Works of William Lisle Bowles*, ed. Rev. George Gilfillan (Edinburgh, 1855), II, 20. All quotations from Bowles's work, except where indicated, will be from this edition, cited hereafter by volume and page.

³ *Scenes and Shadows*, p. xx.

descriptive poems, the pencil and the lyre clash. Hence, in one page, the poet speaks of his lyre, and in the next, when he leaves feelings to paint the eye, before the harp is out of the hand, he turns to the pencil!⁴

Though restricted in this statement to descriptive poetry, the pencil and the harp appear in nearly all of Bowles's works. A study of the relationship between these two modes can account for the modest success of his early sonnets and the merciful lapse of his later, more grandiose efforts into oblivion.

Despite the length and appalling productivity of his poetic career, Bowles is remembered mainly for his earliest work—*Fourteen Sonnets, Elegiac and Descriptive Written during a Tour* (1789), later corrected and expanded to appear as *Sonnets, Written Chiefly on Picturesque Spots during a Tour*. Seven editions were published before 1800, and nearly every important literary figure of the era confessed his interest in the simple and delicate melancholy of Bowles's verse. While a schoolboy at Christ's Hospital, Coleridge was moved to transcribe more than forty copies of this volume for friends (as he recalls in the opening chapter of *Biographia Literaria*), and his "Pain" and "To the River Otter" show the influence of Bowles's "The Bells, Ostend" and "To the River Itchin."⁵ If Coleridge's boyish enthusiasm waned, at least its intensity was preserved in the sonnet addressed to Bowles in 1794.

My heart has thank'd thee, BOWLES! for those soft strains,
That, on the still air floating, tremblingly
Wak'd in me Fancy, Love, and Sympathy!⁶

The favorable comments of Lamb, Wordsworth, and Southey⁷ contrast with Byron's epithet for Bowles as the "maudlin prince of mournful sonneteers."⁸ In 1791 a letter to the *Gentleman's Magazine* exclaimed,

The harmony of his verse, the dignified simplicity of his expression, and the sublimity and pathos of his ideas, are perfectly original, and utterly inimitable . . . a Sonnet ought to be a combination, or rather a selection, of all the beauties of poetry. . . . That such has been our author's idea of this kind of composition, the delighted fancy, the exalted soul, and the improved heart of everyone who peruses his work will witness.⁹

Bowles's achievement in this 1789 volume was, more than anything, one of timing. Hayley, Darwin, and the Della Cruscan could provide little inspiration to a young generation of poets; but in *Fourteen*

⁴ Preface to "Banwell Hill," II, 7.

⁵ See the commentary by W. K. Wimsatt, Jr., "Romantic Nature Imagery," *The Verbal Icon: Studies in the Meaning of Poetry* (Lexington, 1954), pp. 105-10.

⁶ "To the Rev. W. L. Bowles," *Poems of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (London, 1954), p. 84.

⁷ Quoted by Garland Greever, *A Wiltshire Parson and His Friends: The Correspondence of William Lisle Bowles* (London, 1926), pp. 20-28.

⁸ "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers," line 330; *Don Juan and Other Satirical Poems* (New York, 1935), p. 16.

⁹ Letter from L—s—r C—r—s, *Gentleman's Magazine*, LXI (December, 1791), Part 2, 1114.

Sonnets, however awkward in technique and diffuse in sentiment they may appear to a modern reader, this generation found a kind of poetry for which it could feel some sympathy. Contrary to his later statement about the inevitable opposition of the pencil and the harp, Bowles's success in these sonnets was based on a union of scene and emotion he was never again able to attain.

Soon after receiving his B.A. from Oxford in 1785, Bowles fell in love with a niece of Sir Samuel Romilly, only to be rejected because of his uncertain prospects, and on a tour undertaken for solace he relieved his disappointment by writing sonnets. These, said the author,

can be considered in no other light than as exhibiting occasional reflections which naturally arose in his mind, chiefly during various excursions, undertaken to relieve, at the time, depression of spirits. They were, therefore, in general, suggested by the scenes before them; and whenever such scenes appeared to harmonise with his disposition at the moment, the sentiments were involuntarily prompted.¹⁰

Bowles's comment on the composition of *Fourteen Sonnets* has considerable significance. Its emphasis on a harmony between landscape and mood as the condition for a spontaneous outburst of poetic sentiment not only anticipates romantic theory and practice. It contradicts Bowles's own remark about the clashing of pencil and harp and reveals his desire to communicate an intensely personal experience within the genre of landscape poetry: "there is a great difference between *natural* and *fabricated* feelings, even in poetry. To which of these two characters the poems before the reader belong, the author leaves those who have felt sensations of sorrow to judge" (Preface, I, 1). While Bowles managed, according to the response of his most immediate audience, to convey the sincerity of his sadness, the main critical issue is the quality of the union between "scene" and "disposition" in the sonnets themselves.

Various kinds of imaginative experience can be distinguished in *Fourteen Sonnets*. The octave of "The River Wainsbeck" has the alliteration, compound epithets, and personification common in eighteenth-century topographical verse; but as the elements of the landscape emerge, the status of the poet seems less and less purely conventional.

While slowly wanders thy sequestered stream,
 WAINSBECK, the mossy-scattered rocks among,
 In fancy's ear making a plaintive song
 To the dark woods above, that waving seem
 To bend o'er some enchanted spot, removed
 From life's vain coil; I listen to the wind,
 And think I hear meek Sorrow's plaint, reclined
 O'er the forsaken tomb of him she loved!—
 (I, 8)

Just as the stream makes its doleful lament to the dark woods, so the

¹⁰ Preface to 1805 edition, I, 1.

wind speaks to the poet's imagination and evokes a visual and auditory exemplar of distraught love. The poet thus becomes identified with the "dark woods" and, caught up in their way of perceiving, is now, himself, bent "o'er some enchanted spot," while the plaintive song of the stream, heard "In fancy's ear" wandering among the rocks, modulates into "Sorrow's plaint," seen in the mind's eye reclining over the forsaken tomb.

From this moment of entrance into nature the poet gains spiritual refreshment.

Fair scenes, ye lend a pleasure, long unknown,
To him who passes weary on his way;—
Yet recreated here he may delay
A while to thank you; and when years have flown,
And haunts that charmed his youth he would renew,
In the world's crowd he will remember you.
(I, 9)

Comparison with Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" is tempting, for although Bowles was not led to see deeply "into the life of things," he was, for a moment, at one with the motions and emotions of nature. A similar identification, if less complete, occurs in "At Tyne-mouth Priory," where the poet proclaims himself calmed by the stillness that steals over "Nature's breast,"

While sea-sounds lull her, as she sinks to sleep,
Like melodies that mourn upon the lyre,
Waked by the breeze, and, as they mourn, expire!
(I, 7)

In each of these two sonnets, there is a union between the scene and its influence on the poet's emotions through the music of sound, and this coördination between pencil and harp indicates a stage in the development of "associationism" in eighteenth-century literature. Bowles, in one sense, was experiencing the pleasure which Addison found in deriving secondary ideas from the primary qualities of matter defined by Locke. But by drawing the particulars of a landscape under the control of an insistent, if gentle love-melancholy, Bowles was also illustrating the thesis of Alexander Gerard (*Essay on Genius*, 1774) that passion could provide an organizing form for associations.¹¹ Such coördination between pencil and harp obviously is less than the "coalescence" which became the imaginative recreation of Wordsworth and Coleridge; it deserves, however, a modest place among other, more frequently noted, pre-romantic phenomena.

Bowles's "On Leaving a Village in Scotland" and "Evening," though lacking any auditory connection between visual recollection and inner feeling, also point out picturesque scenes as a source of

¹¹ An account of "associationism" in general and the work of Gerard in particular can be derived from the following studies: Walter J. Bate, *From Classic to Romantic: Premises of Taste in Eighteenth Century England* (Cambridge, Mass., 1956); Walter J. Hipple, Jr., *The Beautiful, the Sublime, and the Picturesque in Eighteenth Century British Aesthetic Theory* (Carbondale, 1957); Gordon McKenzie, *Critical Responsiveness* (Berkeley, 1949).

strength for the tired mind. The description of landscape, as in the other early sonnets, is followed by the poet's emotion or by the moral drawn from the experience of some "wanderer" or "stranger." Once again, the transition is effected through contrasting or similar moods: the stolid and enduring headlands in "Dover Cliffs" are emblematic of the courage needed by a lonely traveler; the cheerful sunlight of a seascape in "On Landing at Ostend" chides the poet's wayward passions; and the recollection of past joys in "The River Cherwell" brings solace and resignation. To render less abrupt the transition between landscape and mood, Bowles employed a variety of technical devices (inversions, parallel clauses, and simple enjambment) to blur the traditional break between octave and sestet and build up some sort of close syntactical connection, some strengthened sense of continuity between the two parts of his poem. The union between "scene" and "disposition" in *Fourteen Sonnets* thus varies from a full entrance of the poet's imagination into nature, the mutuality of pencil and harp, to a simple transition from topical detail to emotional mood.

Throughout all these poems, it is tacitly assumed that aesthetic sensibility can lead to moral sentiments, an assumption revealed most explicitly in "The Convent," which elaborates upon the picture of Sorrow and her lover's tomb in "The River Wainsbeck."

If chance some pensive stranger, hither led,
His bosom glowing from majestic views,
Temple and tower 'mid the bright landscape's hues,
Should ask who sleeps beneath this lowly bed?
A maid of sorrow. To the cloistered scene,
Unknown and beautiful a mourner came,
Seeking with unseen tears to quench the flame
Of hapless love: yet was her look serene
As the pale moonlight in the midnight aisle:—
(I, 14-15)

A connoisseur of the picturesque, having just left the perusal of some vast perspective, asks the same question as the "kindred Spirit" in Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" and receives in answer the account of the unfortunate lady in Pope's "Elegy." By introducing a virtuoso to hear this Gothic tale, Bowles was in harmony with the philosophical theories of Shaftesbury and Hutcheson; if virtue were considered to have an aesthetically pleasing form, then anyone attracted by the beauties of nature would be endowed, most likely, with a highly developed moral sense and capacity for sympathizing with human suffering. This probability is the principle underlying nearly all of Bowles's poetry.

Within his first volume Bowles brought together much more than the two kinds of sensibility which, inherited from his parents, he displayed as a seven-year-old boy before the bell tower of Redcliff Church and on the heights of Brockley-Coombe. The terms he used to describe the modes of poetry which sprang from these sensibilities—the pencil and the harp—refer immediately to landscape description

and to lyric emotions drawn from the heart as music. But, in addition, because of the manner in which Bowles developed the implications of these terms in his poetry, the pencil and the harp also come to represent, in effect, two of the main literary traditions of the eighteenth century: on the one hand, the poetry of natural description and the theories of the picturesque and "pictorialism" centering about *ut pictura poesis*,¹² and, on the other, the concept of the poet as an inspired bard, moved by a primitive genius to express his emotion in irregular harmonies.

Bowles's awareness of the bardic tradition, implicit in his assertion that the "feelings of the heart naturally associate themselves with the idea of the tones of the supposed poetical harp" (II, 7), is more fully revealed by his indebtedness, direct and indirect, to the poetry of Gray, Collins, Percy, and Ossian. If Bowles's "pensive poet" never appeared with the "haggard eyes" and "hoary hair" of Gray's "Bard," he was frequently inspired by the lyre invoked in "The Progress of Poesy"; Bowles himself readily admitted the influence of "The Fatal Sisters" on his "Hymn to Woden."¹³ The lyre-like sea breezes in "At Tynemouth Priory" brought the calm described in the antistrophe of Collins' "Ode on the Poetical Character," and Bowles followed Percy's *Reliques* and his "Hermit of Warkworth" in "The Lay of Talbot, the Troubadour." His recognition of the Ossianic world was more explicit in "Monody on the Death of Dr. Warton."

Then, Ossian, thy wild song
Haply beguiled the unheeded midnight hours,
And, like the blast that swept Berrathron's towers,
Came pleasant and yet mournful to my soul!
(I, 138)

The irregular rhythms and meters often employed by these bardic poets to suggest the rapturous inspiration of their muse and approximate the Pindaric ode may have influenced Bowles, apart from his own interest in music,¹⁴ to produce the cadences which some contemporaries found so original in his sonnets. The *Gentleman's Magazine*, enthusiastic as usual in contrast to the more critical *Quarterly Review*, contained an extravagant tribute to this departure from metrical regularity. "The reader, whose ear can be tricked only by the singsong melody of a Pope, the cadences of which return at as

¹² See Jean H. Hagstrum, *The Sister Arts: The Tradition of Literary Pictorialism and English Poetry from Dryden to Gray* (Chicago, 1958), pp. 129-70.

¹³ I, 113, n. 1. Gray unites the bardic and descriptive traditions in a different way in observing how the illustrator of his *Six Poems* "bids the pencil answer to the lyre." "Stanzas to Mr. Bentley," line 4, *Poems of Gray and Collins* (London, 1937), p. 140.

¹⁴ To Bowles's numerous works associated with music (his tributes to "The Messiah," contemporary singers, and Mozart: I, 25; II, 324, 326), there must be added the poem "In a Music Book" (Harvard MS. Eng. 505.5), not published in any edition of Bowles's works. His love for music apparently lasted well into his final years, for Tom Moore reported that Bowles gaily played the fiddle after dinner at a country dance, much to the amusement of his parishioners. *Diary*, July 28, 1831 (Cambridge, Eng., 1925), p. 158.

stated periods as the pendulum of a clock, will throw aside the verse of Bowles with the same disgust that he would the verse of an Aken-side, a Young, a Milton" (LXI [December, 1791], Pt. 2, 1114).

Though Bowles continued to employ the harp in his later work, its associations became more and more extensive in his mind. In "Elegiac Stanzas Written during Sickness at Bath," the poet's heart is played upon by the gloomy landscape like "wind-swift wires" (I, 73), and the invocation of "The Harp, and Despair, of Cowper" recall the Olney hymns.

Sweet bard, whose tones great Milton might approve,
And Shakspeare, from high Fancy's sphere,
Turning to the sound his ear
Bend down a look of sympathy and love;
Oh, swell the lyre again,
As if in full accord it poured an angel's strain!
(I, 151)

In "The Harp of Hoel," drawn from the same Welsh past as Gray's "The Death of Hoel," the minstrel warrior is recognized by his former love Gwenhian, now married to another, only after his playing on the long abandoned harp, which sets quite literally the melancholy tone of the ballad.

Bowles's poetry of natural description, the mode of the pencil, is even more clearly related to a main literary tradition of the eighteenth century; for the clearest illustrations of this relationship, the *Fourteen Sonnets* must be briefly reexamined. Though many of these deal with the landscapes of actual localities, the recurrence of certain scenic details suggests that Bowles was attracted by an *Ideallandschaft* much in the manner of the picturesque. Waving branches hang over the water in "The River Wainsbeck," "The River Cherwell," and "The Tweed Visited," creating a gloomy charm, and these wandering streams are all described as possessing a wavy outline quite similar to that praised in Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty*. Cliffs frown down on the poet, and ivied towers and gray battlements appear, rising in the foreground or seen in the distance, often touched with the last light of sunset. "On Leaving a Village in Scotland" contains Bowles's typical landscape, composed

Of rocks amid the sunshine towering dark,
Of rivers winding wild, or mountains hoar,
Or castle gleaming on the distant steep!—
(I, 10)

In Bowles's "Sketch from Bowden Hill after Sickness" (1806), the reappearance of the more prominent features of the sonnet landscapes, carefully selected from the actual scene surrounding Bowden Hill, indicates the unvarying technique of his descriptive style.

As thus the eye ranges from hill to hill,
Here white with passing sunshine, there with trees
Innumerable shaded, clustering more,

As the long vale retires, the ample scene,
Warm with new grace and beauty, seems to live.
(I, 220)

Using the here/there technique of Pope in "Windsor Forest" (lines 17-24) and Wordsworth in "An Evening Walk" (lines 100-104) to set up receding planes like those in Claude's paintings, Bowles leads the eye into the scene and points out some of the details: the spires of a far-off village and the turret of "yonder ivied cloisters," the tower of Lacock Abbey. Grateful for new strength after illness, Bowles in this "Sketch" calls directly upon the spirit of his muse,

not to display
Vain ostentations of a poet's art,
But silent, and associate of my joys
Or sorrows, to infuse a tenderness,
A thought, that seems to mingle, as I gaze,
With all the works of God. (I, 222)

This approximation to a communion with nature, the closest one outside of the early sonnets, is nevertheless qualified by the conscious artistry of Bowles's perception, his eagerness to see the landscape as a painting:

where the passing light
Alternate falls, 'mid undistinguished trees,
White dots of gleamy domes, and peeping towers,
As from the painter's instant touch, appear.
(I, 220)

Pictorial art receives even more credit in "On a Landscape by Rubens" (1803).

NAY, let us gaze, ev'n till the sense is full,
Upon the rich creation, shadowed so
That not great Nature, in her loftiest pomp
Of living beauty, ever on the sight
Rose more magnificent. . . . (I, 142)

Influenced by the "fervour" of Rubens' "pencil," the mind

sees the painter, with no human touch,
Create, embellish, animate at will,
The mimic scenes, from Nature's ampler range
Caught as by inspiration. . . . (I, 142)

A parade of figures next appears—the "booted fowler," the "boor" intent on the "speckled partridges" (reminiscent of "Windsor Forest"), a "country Kate," a "fisher" and his girl. Comments on the styles of Beaumont, Savage, Salvator Rosa, Poussin, Claude, and Gainsborough then culminate in a final tribute to the painter whose work was at hand.

Scenes like these
Shall charm all hearts, while truth and beauty live,
And Nature's pictured loveliness shall own
Each master's varied touch; but chiefly thou,
Great Rubens! (I, 149)

After overcoming the grief that evoked his original sentiments in the scenes of *Fourteen Sonnets*, Bowles tended to emphasize aspects of artistic theory and practice in his later poetry. He became more concerned with matters painterly and anecdotal, less conscious of an experiencing self.

Bowles's success in *Fourteen Sonnets* had been to a degree assured by his poetic form, enforcing concision and continuity within a limited space; fourteen lines, as he observed himself, "seemed best adapted to unity of sentiment."¹⁵ More important was his creation of the sense of an individual consciousness, attributed either to the poet or some "stranger," within which this "unity of sentiment" could be centered. Gray had already portrayed the mourner of the "Elegy," and the reminiscent mind of "Tintern Abbey" was to unfold itself in "The Prelude." But Bowles's later poetry sacrificed the illusion of immediate personal experience and became the mere juxtaposition of landscape scenes and disembodied moods or moral imperatives. In the sonnet "The Rhine," the well-known eighteenth-century "progress" motif appears with relative subtlety, the poet's passage down the stream intimating metaphorically the course of human life. This motif was later expressed by Bowles more as an aphorism; when Rector of Bremhill, he made a direct equation between scenic detail and moral truth for an inscription in his churchyard.

Look round, the distant prospect is display'd
Like life's fair landscape, mark'd with light and shade.
Stranger, in peace pursue thy onward road,
But ne'er forget thy long and last abode.¹⁶

The decline of Bowles's modest poetical talents, though accompanied by increased didacticism and a decreased emphasis on any unifying center of consciousness, was marked primarily by his separation of pencil and harp, once interacting modes of composition in the landscape, and his use of them to bring in extraneous materials. In "Coombe-Ellen" (1798) a picturesque scene of sheep grazing on a precipice is followed by Bowles's concern for those who climb the "rugged path of life without a friend." Encouragement is resolutely forthcoming.

Oh, yet bear on;
He who sustains the bleating lamb shall feed
And comfort you. . . . (I, 118)

The harp of a nearby "pale minstrel" then gives forth a lyric interlude of irregular meter dealing with the legendary Caradoc, and other scenes (the "Cape of utmost Horn" and New Zealand) and other arts (the music of Handel) are introduced. An allusion to the multi-

¹⁵ Introduction to the 1837 edition, I, 2, n. 1.

¹⁶ Quoted in a letter by "N." May 9, 1827, *Gentleman's Magazine*, XC VII (June, 1827), Part 1, 493. Bowles's career in the church was quietly successful. Ordained as deacon of a small Wiltshire curacy in 1788, he was appointed Vicar of Bremhill in 1804 and later Chaplain to the Prince Regent and Canon Resident of Salisbury Cathedral.

tudes that "fret their little hour" upon the scene precedes the end of the travelogue.

Here, then, I leave my harp, which I have touched
With careless hand, and here I bid farewell
To Fancy's fading pictures, and farewell
The ideal spirit that abides unseen
'Mid rocks, and woods, and solitudes.
(I, 124-25)

In "St. Michael's Mount," written in the year of the *Lyrical Ballads*, Bowles touched on all possible associations of the scene: legends of Druid rites, the wars of Brutus' followers and Norsemen, and the pitiable plight of coal miners in shafts stretching out under the sea. Other traditions associated with the mount, "looking steadfast to Bayonna's shore," bring forth an inevitable reference to

the sweet song (whose strain
Shall never die) of him who wept in vain
For his loved Lycidas. . . . (I, 109)

Predictably, the opening lines of Milton's elegy are echoed:

Yet once more, azure ocean, and once more,
Ye lighted headlands, and thou stretching shore. . . .
(I, 109)

With reference to Coleridge's loss of poetic power, Bowles recalled his friend's "young and romantic days of poetry and love, before his beautiful spirit was led astray into the bogs and quagmires of muddy metaphysics."¹⁷ Coleridge might well have replied in kind about the overpowering hodgepodge of tedium that found its way into Bowles's "Banwell Hill" (1828). This blank-verse extravaganza of five parts was to be evaluated, according to the Preface, by "the judgment, propriety, and feeling with which—in just and proper succession and relief—picture, pathos, moral and religious reflections, historical notices, or affecting incidents are interwoven" (II, 3). At its beginning the traditions of pencil and harp are simultaneously, but disjunctively, invoked.

If, gazing from this eminence, I wake,
With thronging thoughts, the harp of poesy
Once more, ere night descend, haply with tones
Fainter, and haply with a long farewell;
If, looking back upon the lengthened way
My feet have trod, since, long ago, I left
Those well-known shores, and when mine eyes are filled
With tears, I take the pencil in its turn,
And shading light the landscape spread below,
So smilingly beguile those starting tears;
Something, the feelings of the human heart—

¹⁷ *Melodies of Melancholy and Fancy from the Morning to the Evening of Life* (Harvard MS. Eng. 505), p. 23. This passage was removed before the text reached its final form (with the more familiar title of *Scenes and Shadows*) on the advice of William Pickering, Bowles's printer, whose handwritten annotations may be seen in this early printed version.

Something, the scene itself, and something more—
 A wish to gratify one generous mind—
 May plead for pardon. (II, 9)

The appeal which this spot held for Bowles was not one of personal reminiscence, suffused with sadness at the loss of a loved one. It was an appeal which would have been understood by Sir Thomas Browne, whose works had a prominent place in Bowles's library¹⁸ and whose rich prose would have been an infinitely more entertaining medium for the discussion of this topic than Bowles's blank verse. The appeal was to the antiquarian, for in a cave on the north side of Banwell Hill a vast accumulation of bones had been discovered, apparently belonging to successive generations of antediluvian beasts of prey.¹⁹ From a geological description of the cave and its contents Bowles wandered off to touch on a wide range of matters: the fate of all human empires as prefigured by the deluge, the state of religious orthodoxy in English parishes, unrequited love in the narrative interlude of "The Maiden's Curse" (originally published anonymously by him in 1823 as "Ellen Gray"), recollections about his youthful days near Bristol, and final prayers for the Church and his own soul.

This same pastiche of allusions to literary works, historical events, and geographical exploration is also characteristic of Bowles's other long poems—"The Spirit of Discovery" (1804), "The Missionary" (1813), "The Grave of the Last Saxon" (1822), and "St. John in Patmos" (1835). In the last of these, a blank-verse version of the revelations granted St. John the Divine, picturesque landscape is replaced by the apostle's lonely cave and his vision: the seven candlesticks and the churches of Asia. Contrasting stanzaic forms, presumably used for variety, dramatize and distinguish the appeal of angelic harmonies and the enticements of earthly love. Bowles, in his last major work, followed his calling as an Anglican clergyman and brought pencil and harp to the altar of religious devotion.

A passage written by Hazlitt at the termination of the Bowles-Byron-Pope²⁰ controversy will serve to define more exactly the nature of these later, longer poems.

Natural objects are common and obvious, and are imbued with an habitual and universal interest, without being vulgar. . . . They form an ideal class; their repeated impression on the mind, in so many different circumstances, grows up into a sentiment. The reason is, that we refer them generally and collectively to ourselves, as links and mementos of our various being; whereas,

¹⁸ *Tom Moore's Diary*, September 1, 1818 (Cambridge, Eng., 1925), p. 3.

¹⁹ Bowles's keen interest in this discovery was part of his wider interest in all antiquities. A review of Sir Richard Colt Hoare's *History of Ancient Wiltshire* contains a poem by Bowles about the contents of a barrow between Old Sarum and Dorchester (*Gentleman's Magazine*, LXXXII [August, 1812], Part 2, 122). In the year before "Banwell Hill" appeared, Bowles was involved in a lengthy dispute about Celtic remains in Wiltshire (*ibid.*, XCVII [July, 1827], Part 2, 22, through XCVIII [October, 1828], Part 2, 314). In 1828 he published two works dealing with local traditions, *Parochial History of Bremhill and Hermes Britannicus*.

²⁰ See J. J. van Rennes, *Bowles, Byron, and the Pope Controversy* (Paris, 1927), *passim*.

we refer the works of art respectively to those by whom they are made or to whom they belong.²¹

This distinction points to the main development in Bowles's poetry of landscape description written after the sonnets. He found in natural scenes fewer "links and mementos of our various being" and instead dealt with them according to their theological provenance or historical associations, referring natural objects—as Hazlitt did works of art—"to those by whom they are made or to whom they belong," namely, to God or to the men and events of history.

In the *Advertisement* to a later edition of "St. John in Patmos," published with a group of the sonnets in revised form, Bowles surveyed his poetic career.

Since these [works] were written, I have lived to hear the sounds of other harps, whose masters have struck far more sublime chords, and died. I have lived to see . . . many illustrious masters of the lyre, whose names I need not specify, crowned with younger and more verdant laurels, which they yet gracefully wear. Some who now rank high in the poet's art have acknowledged that their feelings were first excited by these youthful strains, which I have now, with melancholy feelings, revised for the last time.

It is a consolation that, from youth to age, I have found no line I wished to blot, or departed a moment from the severer taste which I imbibed from the simplest and purest models of classical composition. (II, 144)

Though Bowles correctly assessed the influence on the romantic poets of his *Fourteen Sonnets*, soon surpassed by more "sublime chords," he was unaware of the change that had taken place in his own later work. It was not, as he might have feared, a departure from any severer classical taste; it was rather the deterioration of a sensibility which he had briefly achieved without realizing its essential nature.

The most important factor in this decline was, very simply, Bowles's narrow conception of poetry. He came to regard his art as composed of two independent elements: the visual stimulus of landscape as depicted by the pencil and the emotional response awakened in the harp of self by external influences. For him, somehow, the description of any subject was to be separated from an expression of the effect of that subject on the poet's emotions ("the harp cannot paint woods and hills"). Yet for a time early in his career Bowles had proved in practice that pencil and harp need not necessarily "clash." "Scene" and "disposition" were united in *Fourteen Sonnets* in a relationship that created, for his contemporaries at least, a spell of gentle and pervasive melancholy. The complete separation of these two elements in Bowles's more lengthy poems, complicated by the intrusive appearance of political, religious, and archeological materials, prevented any further invocation of this spell, and these elements often became devices to introduce a scenic vista or lyric outburst, mere interludes in some tiresome narrative or moral exhortation. Bowles's style, always "phrasal" rather than "clausal" in syntax (involute compounding of

²¹ "Pope, Lord Byron, and Mr. Bowles," *Lectures on the English Poets* (London, 1849), Appendix IV, p. 250.

subjects) and in vocabulary (nouns and adjectives outnumbering verbs: ornate and "sublime" diction),²² was characteristic of a mind which tended to digress and accumulate a disparate, diffuse subject matter.

Somewhat the same pattern exists in the poetry of John Dyer, beginning with the simplicity of "Grongar Hill" and culminating in the heterogeneity of "The Ruins of Rome" and "The Fleece"; and to a lesser degree it is apparent in the difference between James Thomson's "Seasons" and his "Liberty." The later works of Dyer, Thomson, and Bowles represent, in effect, the kind of poetry which can illustrate the more mechanical theories of association of Hume and Hartley. Bowles never realized that he had at times transcended this kind of poetry in the early sonnets, although he would have understood the achievement itself: the integration of pencil and harp not by their mere contiguity in space and time, but through the unifying force of immediate personal feeling.

An indifferent poet [as Alexander Gerard observed in 1774] considers an object connected with a passion in general and abstractedly. . . . A good poet considers an object connected with a passion from this one point of view only, and . . . [conceives only] such associations as a person actually under that passion would be likely to make.²³

Coleridge's comment on the overt didacticism of Bowles's later poems goes to the center of the problem. Referring to the two volumes published in 1802, he complained to Sotheby:

There reigns through all the blank verse poems such a perpetual trick of moralizing everything, which is very well, occasionally, but never to see or describe any interesting appearance in nature without connecting it, by dim analogies, with the moral world proves faintness of impression. Nature has her proper interest, and he will know what it is who believes and feels that everything has a life of its own, and that we are all *One Life*. A poet's heart and intellect should be *combined*, intimately combined and unified with the great appearances of nature, and not merely held in solution and loose mixture with them, in the shape of formal similes. I do not mean to exclude these formal similes; there are moods of mind in which they are natural . . . but they are not his [Bowles's] highest and most appropriate moods. They are "*sermoni propria*" . . .²⁴

²² See Josephine Miles, *Eras and Modes in English Poetry* (Berkeley, 1957), pp. 2-3, 10-12. In Appendix A, "Proportions, Measures, and Vocabulary of Poets, 1500-1940," Bowles is shown (p. 226) to employ adjectives, nouns, and verbs in the ratio of 13-19-10, a "phrasal" poet in a "balanced" era.

²³ *Essay on Genius* (London, 1774), pp. 170-71. Quoted by McKenzie, *Critical Responsiveness*, p. 133.

²⁴ Letter CXXX, September 10, 1802, *Letters*, ed. E. H. Coleridge (London, 1895), I, 403-404. It must be noted that Coleridge, who was not referring in this passage to *Fourteen Sonnets*, had an almost unqualified admiration for Bowles before 1796. He called him "the bard of my idolatry" (Letter LXIV, November 19, 1796, *ibid.*, I, 179) and despite his Della Cruscanism "the only *always natural* in our language" (Letter LXVIII, December 17, 1796, *ibid.*, I, 196). Among a list of projected works drawn up in 1796 was an "Essay on Bowles"; *Notebooks* (New York, 1957), I, entry 161[d], v. 5, 211. At this time, according to Joseph Cottle, Coleridge "generally contrived, either by direct amalgamation or digression, to notice, in the warmest encomiastic language, Bishop Berkeley, David Hartley, or Mr. Bowles . . . [but] an altered feeling toward that gentleman was manifested after his visit, not so much expressed by

Many of the landscape scenes and lyric interludes in the poetry after the 1789 volume, simple exempla with "formal similes," would indeed have been more appropriate in a sermon, and few passages contain the sense of "One Life" which lifted certain of the sonnets to brief contemporary renown.

Bowles's importance, if admittedly limited, still is worth assessing. Like Akenside and Cowper, he strove to express through a derivative style the vague spiritual apprehensions which in stronger minds were soon to lead to a reconsideration of English poetic diction. Though Bowles merely glossed the themes of meditation and seldom followed their ebbing and eddying currents, he did bring two eighteenth-century traditions into a form that had an influence on the poets of another generation. Ironically enough, the poet whose early work aroused sympathy in the romantics quickly reverted (the distance was all too short) to the arch and abstract language against which his early admirers directed their most effective criticism.

Bowles's similes for the styles of pictorial "scene" and emotive "disposition" were eventually absorbed by new and altered forms. Once a term for the poet-painter's technique in copying scenic detail, the pencil was made subservient to Wordsworth's "certain colouring of imagination"; its thin lines disappeared into a more metaphoric imaging.²⁵ And the harp which introduced and celebrated coincidental associations in Bowles's later poetry became for Coleridge and Shelley the symbol of a creative animus within all phenomena and the response of a mind sensitive to its harmonies; the "correspondent breeze" of romantic poetry brought to the Aeolian lyre and lyric heart not nostalgic calm, but an inspirational dissonance, the purifying wind of a revolution that was social and political as well as within the poet's interior world.²⁶ Bowles's use of the pencil and the harp reveals much more than the nature of a minor poetic sensibility and the manner of its deterioration. These terms, representing the similes of one era for its arts and the symbols of another for its processes of imagination, suggest the way in which two poetic traditions were maintained, transmitted, and ultimately transformed.

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words, as by his subdued tone of applause." *Early Recollections* (London, 1837), I, 30-31. Coleridge's changed attitude toward Bowles after 1796 reveals in part the development of his poetry between "The Eolian Harp" and "Kubla Khan."

²⁵ "The use of painting to illuminate the essential character of poetry—*ut pictura poesis*—so widespread in the eighteenth century, almost disappears in the major criticism of the romantic period.... In place of painting, music becomes the art frequently pointed to as having a profound affinity with poetry." M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp* (New York, 1953), p. 50.

²⁶ Abrams, in "The Correspondent Breeze: A Romantic Metaphor," *Kenyon Review*, XIX (Winter, 1957), 113-30, examines romantic "air-in-motion" poetry and its differences from eighteenth-century verse of melancholy and spleen. Bowles's poems often move in an erratic, unsatisfactory way between the two, even though Coleridge did describe their early influence on him as a metaphorical sort of breeze: "soft strains...on the still air floating, tremblingly" (see n. 6 above).

THE FREEDOM OF TAMBURLAINE

By MICHAEL QUINN

Robert Greene was presumably the first to describe Marlowe's Tamburlaine as an atheist, but we can no longer be sure what he meant by the word. Certainly, in *Tamburlaine*, there are few, if any, of the "shocking" trivialities of the Baines note and the Kyd letter; yet the play does imply a conception of man so unorthodox that an Elizabethan might be excused for branding it as "atheist." The very form of the word insists on a predominantly negative definition: a denial of generally accepted beliefs, especially of belief in God, rather than an assertion of contrary positive beliefs. In *Tamburlaine* this characteristic negation is present; it is used, however, not simply to destroy, but, in a manner comparable to the traditional theology of divinity, as one mode of defining a positive, though highly unorthodox, moral ideal. As I see it, *Tamburlaine* poses, probably as a hypothesis, the idea of a personal morality that is completely self-contained, depending for its sanctions neither on divine revelation nor on the recognition of man as a member of the *polis*.

When he first appears, Tamburlaine states his aim in life to be "freedom": "I loue to liue at liberty. . . . And must maintaine my life exempt from seruitude" (222-27; cf. 509-10).¹ Freedom is and always has been a difficult concept to define. The word was much used in the sixteenth century, especially in theological discussion, and then, as now, the tendency was to define the idea negatively, as freedom from some tyranny rather than freedom to do something positive. In *Tamburlaine* important aspects of the concept are defined by means of negation, of denials of the traditional sanctions on human behavior imposed by degree, fortune, and divine vengeance for sin.²

Tamburlaine denies that he is in any way bound by the hierarchy of "degree." Other characters in the play assert the authority of the idea, but Tamburlaine and his companions are ambitious "by profession" (825) and hence seem, to the more orthodox, "The strangest men that euer nature made" (891). Yet they are less strange than they may seem at first sight. The opening scenes of *Tamburlaine* demonstrate the inadequacy of Mycetes as ruler and justify, at least

¹ All references are to the reprint of the 1590 edition in *Works*, ed. C. F. T. Brooke (Oxford, 1910), pp. 5-138.

² This essay concentrates on the *First Part of Tamburlaine*, although much of the argument applies also to the *Second Part* and to Marlowe's later plays. I proceed on the generally held assumption that the exhaustion of the source material in the *First Part* and the Prologue to the *Second Part* justify us in regarding the former as a separate, self-subsisting play, written without the idea of a sequel in mind; nevertheless, convincing evidence that *Tamburlaine* was conceived as a two-part play would not, I think, necessitate any serious modification of the argument.

by implication, Cosroe's seizure of power because he is a man more fitted to serve the interests of the Persian state.

This raises the hoary question of Elizabethan moral philosophy: in the innumerable cases in which social rank is not reinforced by personal nobility, which has the greater claim to respect? Marlowe is much less evasive and ambiguous than many contemporary moralists, and his answers, if far from being completely satisfying, are at least logically consistent. If Cosroe, because of his greater abilities, is more worthy to be king than Mycetes, then Tamburlaine's appearance and deeds prove him to be superior in every way, except birth, to Cosroe. This does not, however, amount to a universal commandment to rebel, as Paul Kocher has suggested.³

Tamburlaine and his companions are justified in their ambitious quest, first, because they have a genuine thirst and hunger for power,⁴ but also, and more important, because they have the abilities to satisfy those desires. *Nosce teipsum* applies here in a new sense: one must recognize one's potentialities and have the determination to realize them in action. Degree is normally a theme for discussion that is predominantly political; but not, I think, in *Tamburlaine*. At no time, unless perhaps in the self-justifications of Cosroe, is it made an occasion for an analysis of the sources of political order or disorder. Degree is rejected because it would deprive Tamburlaine of Zenocrate, because it requires him to subordinate himself to men inferior in *virtù*, because it places a major obstacle in the way of his dream of absolute self-realization: "I must maintaine my life exempt from seruitude."

Others see Tamburlaine as the favored child of Fortune, but Tamburlaine himself, though he occasionally admits Fortune as a partner, denies any subjection to the fickle lady. Clearly, this implies that the credit for his achievements is due to himself alone. But it also implies a denial of that fundamental limitation of which Fortune was the traditional symbol: the mutability of all things. For medieval and Renaissance man, the fact of mutability tended to argue the pointlessness of all temporal achievement: as Marlowe himself puts it, in *Edward II*, "all liue to die, and rise to fall" (1979). No such denial of the value of this world can affect the man whose efforts are directed to a clearly conceived material end and who is confident that he has the abilities required to achieve that end. So, when Zenocrate, a character whose attitudes and convictions are much more orthodox than those of her revolutionary lord, draws from the "vntimely deathes" of Bajazeth and Zabina the traditional moral *de contemptu mundi* (2132-36), and then goes on to apply the lesson to Tamburlaine himself, lamenting that he should fight for "slippery crownes"

³ P. H. Kocher, *Christopher Marlowe: A Study of His Thought, Learning and Character* (Chapel Hill, 1946), pp. 70 ff.

⁴ It is perhaps worth noting that Tamburlaine's aspirations are usually described in terms of appetites, particularly hunger and thirst.

and trust his fate to "the wauering turnes of war," she is immediately answered by Anippe: Tamburlaine so commands Fortune that she can

turne her wheele no more,
As long as life maintaines his mighty arme,
That fights for honor to adorne your head.
(2156-58)

This line of argument, as Voegelin has pointed out,⁸ involves a denial of the possibility of tragedy. Marlowe was in fact turning the tables on the great mass of sixteenth-century moralists who tended to crudify the tragic sense, in the manner of Job's comforters, by making only the wicked fail and only the virtuous succeed. He saw the logical fallacy of this: that the moralists, insisting on the providence of God, end by elevating the achievements of man. So he makes his hero succeed through his own abilities and his opponents fail through their lack of them. Mystery is thus exorcised from history, and the reasonable explanation of Tamburlaine's success makes nonsense of the title page's description of the two plays as "tragicall discourses."

Tamburlaine's third freedom is from the inevitability of divine retribution for sin. Other characters believe in a just deity who will prosper their efforts to chastise one who continually offends against what they believe to be an immutable moral law. This faith proves as worthless and ill-founded as their faith in Fortune's wheel, which is not altogether surprising, since, as many contemporary moralists pointed out (though usually without much eagerness to do anything about resolving the difficulty), the two faiths were not easily reconciled. "Doost thou think that *Mahomet* wil suffer this?" asks Theridamas; and Techelles answers, "Tis like he wil, when he cannot let it" (1691-92).

The supernatural, whether Christian or Mohammedan, has, it would seem, little influence on human affairs. Tamburlaine either ignores all such threats or else claims divine cooperation, the latter theme becoming much more prominent in the *Second Part* (possibly as a sop to those who found the "atheism" of the *First Part* too strong for their taste). He never once appeals for divine aid; there is no need for him to do so: he is sufficient unto himself. Besides, both prayer for divine assistance and belief in divine retribution depend logically on one's acceptance of a subordinate position, which Tamburlaine's quest for "freedom" specifically excludes; for the "free" man, "guilt" is meaningless.

Tamburlaine may be free from the limitations imposed by an acceptance of the concepts of degree, fortune, and a divine Lawgiver and Judge. Yet he is not wholly free: he is still bound by an immutable "moral" obligation. Apart from the spectacle provided by

⁸ Eric Voegelin, "Machiavelli's Prince: Background and Formation," *Review of Politics*, Vol. 13 (1951), pp. 158-62.

what the running title succinctly describes as "The bloody Conquests of mighty Tamburlaine," much of the dramatic interest of the two plays centers around the revelation of the nature of the hero, who is shown to be a man of "will" or "resolution." This means, first, that he has the power to express himself adequately. Whereas Mycetes finds himself "insufficient to expresse" his purposes, "For it requires a great and thundring speech" (10-11), and has therefore to depend on others to speak for him, Tamburlaine relies on none for counsel or expression. Moreover, he can use such "woorking woordes" (623) that armies are overcome without fighting. The discussion between Tamburlaine and his lieutenants as to whether they should encounter Theridamas with words or swords (324-33) is surely intended to make the point that, for Tamburlaine, there is no difference: his words *are* actions.

This theme recurs throughout the play and, to a considerable extent, our impression of the character of the hero derives from the repeated contrast between his resolution and the irresolution of other characters. Besides the numerous boasts of Tamburlaine's opponents which come to nothing, several of the characters—Mycetes, Bajazeth, the Governors of Damascus and Babylon—make specific resolutions which they later renounce. Only Tamburlaine's "vaunts" prove "substantiall" (408) and his "words are oracles" (1200) because, once he has spoken, the future is determined.

Tamburlaine is thus distinguished from other characters in that for him profession and performance are identical. Marlowe's insistence on this aspect of the Scythian's character might be taken as simply a criticism of the common human failings of lying and boasting. But, clearly, a good deal more is involved. As I see it, Marlowe's demonstration of how contemptible is the failure to equate one's actions with one's words represents a demand for absolute integrity in the individual: that one be true to oneself in a special sense. As I have already suggested, *Nosce teipsum*: but not as the maxim was normally understood. One must recognize one's potentialities and have the determination to realize them in action. Once a man has spoken, has made a "vaunt," he has, as it were, defined an image of himself, an image compounded of desire and imagination; and to that image he must be true. It is not, I think, accidental that there are in the plays several descriptions of Tamburlaine's external appearance: as we may gather from Tamburlaine's own comment on the appearance of Theridamas (360-66), the appearance of a man is the outward sign of his potentiality. And that potentiality must be made actual. Here is the essence of a new morality in which the obligation is not to any external law, but to one's own stated intentions, which stand as declarations of an ideal image of oneself.

To maintain the equation between profession and performance is not simply a matter of "will" or "resolution," however; it is also a matter of truth in the sense of logical consistency, since one must be

fully aware of what his professions have committed him to if he is to press them to their rational conclusions. Perhaps the most striking instance of this is the argument from the one abuse of degree, which has been discussed above. But this argument may be extended even further. If we grant that there are no external limits to man's endeavor, that neither degree, nor fortune, nor divine law have any power to curb man's quest for "freedom," then desire becomes the sole dynamic of life, and there can be no limit to desires, only to achievements. According to Marlowe's argument, however, integrity demands an absolute equation between desire and achievement. Why should Tamburlaine stop at the Persian crown or even at world dominion? Having started on such a quest, logical consistency requires that the conqueror stop at no intermediate end. Because Tamburlaine's desires are unlimited and because "truth" requires that he press on unsparingly toward their satisfaction, though in fact it is impossible, his particular ends in the actual story must be presented symbolically.

Miss Bradbrook has pointed out that Tamburlaine's ambition has no definite object, but exists for itself, and that Marlowe avoids any sense of limitation in his hero's objectives by making them as generalized as possible.⁶ As Miss Bradbrook says, Tamburlaine's conquests are effortless, encountering no serious checks. But they are effortless, not simply in the sense that the audience never has any real doubt about the outcome of any encounter, but also in the more fundamental sense that the challenges to Tamburlaine's supremacy, in so far as they are external to himself, are irrelevant. A valid challenge can originate only within the man himself, arising from a conflict of desires, as indeed does occur in the fifth act of the *First Part*. The challenge of Beauty, which for Marlowe appears to include the qualities of tenderness and compassion, is symbolized in Tamburlaine's relations with Zenocrate, and its demands wage a "doubtfull battell with [his] tempted thoughtes," so that, for the first time, he is troubled "with conceit of foile" (1932 ff.).⁷ But an absolute choice between Beauty and "Virtue" is evaded. Beauty, in so far as it is "effeminate and faint" and "vnseemly" for such a man, is rejected; in so far as it may encourage a warrior with "iust applause" and "beat on his conceites," it is admitted.

Both sets of values are comprehended in Tamburlaine's image of himself; he conceives and subdues both ideals, resolving them into a single ideal. Similarly, in the *Second Part*, Death itself is comprehended and, as it were, conquered by Tamburlaine's achievement of "that magnanimitie, That nobly must admit necessity" (4593-94). The tensions are all internal. Tamburlaine's determination to main-

⁶ M. C. Bradbrook, *Themes and Conventions of Elizabethan Tragedy* (Cambridge, 1935), pp. 138 ff.

⁷ For a fuller discussion of Tamburlaine's struggle with Beauty and Death, see G. I. Duthie, "The Dramatic Structure of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*," *English Studies*, ed. F. P. Wilson (1948), pp. 101-26.

tain an equation between words and deeds has been described, rather misleadingly, as "Orphic"; a more illuminating analogy would be to the Divine Logos, the Creative Word. As with the Trinity, Tamburlaine finds his values only within himself, and moral obligation involves only obedience to such values.

Marlowe poses this ideal, I suspect, as a hypothesis, and the plays stand as a remarkable examination of a conceivable moral standpoint. Its weaknesses are already apparent, however, in the rather facile resolution of Tamburlaine's difficulties with Zenocrate and the idea of Beauty, and they become more evident in the *Second Part*. Although Tamburlaine is free from all the more conventional moral restraints, he is bound by the obligation to fulfill his own "vaunts"; these, however, are the vaunts of a man of "honour" and "virtue," and it is to the realization in action of the word-created image of such a man that Tamburlaine's life is dedicated. But the sense of obligation depends solely on his own desire to become such a man and on consequent power to create the appropriate image in his imagination.

Tamburlaine is, in fact, something of an ascetic; his desire for Zenocrate is remarkably restrained, and only once in the play does he indulge himself with good food and drink, though, even on that occasion, the high point of the feast is an indigestible "course of Crownes." There seems to be no compelling reason why a man should choose to set himself such an ideal, unless he admits the validity of social criteria. Calyphas, in the *Second Part*, is moved by very different desires, offending against "the argument of Armes" by preferring wine to blood, cards and naked ladies to swords and canons (1300 ff.). Tamburlaine may dismiss him as an "Image of sloth, and picture of a slaue" (3765), but can Calyphas help himself?

In Marlowe's later plays only Faustus aspires to anything like Tamburlaine's dream; Barabas and Edward are impelled by baser desires and, in *Edward II* (and possibly also in *Faustus*), the tragedy seems to spring from what might be called "a predestination of desire." The "free" man, even if he asserts his independence of the restraints of degree, fortune, and divine law, finds himself bound to an even more inexorable moral law, that of his own desires.

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ARCHANGEL TO DEVIL THE BACKGROUND OF SATAN'S METAMORPHOSIS

By JOHN M. STEADMAN

To many critics, Milton's "transformation scene"—the metamorphosis of the evil angels into serpents, in *Paradise Lost*, Book X—has seemed arbitrary and inconsistent, an unwarranted degradation of the heroic figures he had delineated in Books I and II. In Herford's opinion, the poet had reduced Satan to a serpent lest he be thought the hero of the poem.¹ For Waldock, the scene embodied the "technique of the comic cartoon."

The method of the cartoon is to allow the villain of the piece to reach a pitch of high confidence and vainglory, and then to dash him down. . . . To attempt to link such a scene as this with what happens in the first books of *Paradise Lost* is to try to bring incommensurables together. . . . The scene is amusing . . . but about Satan it proves literally nothing whatever.²

By thus isolating this episode from its literary and theological background, scholars have frequently underestimated Milton's debt to tradition, on the one hand, and the nature and significance of his innovations, on the other. Satan's metamorphosis was by no means an arbitrary invention on Milton's part. On the contrary, the convention of demonic disfigurement was an old one, and the belief that Lucifer and his companions forfeited their beauty with their allegiance—that their transition from angels to fiends entailed a corresponding debasement in form—had been a recurrent theme in medieval and Renaissance art and literature. Hughes has noted parallels in the works of Boehme, Vondel, and Fletcher.³ The metamorphosis which Waldock and Herford found arbitrary was, in reality, based on a familiar convention.

Nor was it "incommensurable" with Milton's initial representation of the fallen angels. Waldock mistook contrast for inconsistency. In emphasizing the contrast between Lucifer's pristine beauty and his ultimate hideousness, Milton was actually following an established tradition: the conventional degeneration from angel to devil. The alterations in Satan's appearance between Books I and X conformed to a familiar pattern. They violated neither probability nor consistency.

The aesthetic value of this scene derived largely from two comple-

¹ C. H. Herford, "Dante and Milton," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, VIII (1924), 223.

² A. J. A. Waldock, *Paradise Lost and Its Critics* (Cambridge, 1947), pp. 91-92.

³ Merritt Y. Hughes, "Myself Am Hell," *MP*, LIV (1956), 91-93.

mentary factors: convention and surprise. Satan's transformation gained additional force from its suddenness, credibility from the tradition behind it. Milton's most striking departure from convention resided, in fact, in the timing rather than in the nature of this metamorphosis. Unlike his predecessors, who had usually regarded Satan's disfigurement as simultaneous with his fall, Milton postponed this change until after the temptation and fall of man. Through this innovation he was able to present his devils initially in a heroic light. Satan himself, though shorn of "th' excess Of Glory," was no "Less than Arch Angel ruind," still endowed with much of his "Original brightness." His companions were likewise "Godlike shapes and forms Excelling human." This introductory portrait of the fallen angels as defeated heroes rather than as distorted fiends constituted a far greater variation on tradition than Milton's subsequent account of their transformation into serpents.

Two factors make a further examination of this scene and its background advisable. In the first place, the tradition of demonic transformation was far more extensive than scholars have hitherto recognized. Secondly, the significance of Milton's variations on this theme can be ascertained only by examining them in relation to their background. Accordingly, this study will involve (1) the theory of demonic disfigurement, (2) its popularity during the Middle Ages and Renaissance, and (3) Milton's exploitation of this convention in *Paradise Lost*.

According to Neoplatonic theory, Lucifer's body lost its light and beauty after his rebellion and became dark, gross, ugly, and sensitive to pain. Psellus⁴ devoted a chapter of his *Dialogus de Daemonum Energia* to the question "De angelici corporis a daemoniaco, splendorisque a solari differentia et discrimine," emphasizing the sharp distinction between the bodies of angels and demons:

Angelicum enim, quia extraneos nescio quos splendores emittit et ejaculatur, idcirco exteriores oculos fulgore suo perstringit, nec ab iis ferri tolerare potest. Daemoniacum vero an huiusmodi quondam fuerit, affirmare non ausim, fuisse tamen videtur. Cum enim qui lapsus est Luciferum vocet Isaias [Isaiah xiv.12], nunc vero tenebrosus nescio quid et obscurum est, atque visu tristificum, utpote cognato lumine orbatum. Atque angelicum quidem omni prorsus materia vacat, quo fit etiam ut semper solidum, penetrabile, atque permeabile sit ipsoque solari radio impatiibilis. Hunc enim transparentia seu pellucida corpora permeantem ea refringunt, quae terrena et opaca sunt, ita ut ictum quidem luminis ferant quippe qui materiae non sit expers; at angelico corpori huiusmodi corporum nullum obstitit, quippe cui nihil adversetur consentaneumve sit. Daemoniaci vero corpora, quamlibet visum prae tenuitate subterfugiant, materiae tamen non-nihil habent, patibiliaque quodammodo sunt, eaque cum primis quae subterraneos specus subeunt. Ea enim illorum est constitutio, ut contactibus exponantur obnoxiae sint, percussa ingemant, et flammis admota urantur. . . . Ita percutiuntur, quemadmodum Marcus astruebat, ut etiam certo ictu in cutem inflicto indoleant.⁵

⁴ See Robert H. West, "Milton and Michael Psellus," *PQ*, XXVIII (1949), 477-89.

Ralph Cudworth quoted Psellus' views in *The True Intellectual System of the Universe*.⁸ St. Augustine, he observed, had defined "the difference betwixt the bodies of angels and devils in this manner: Daemones, antequam transgrederentur, coelestia corpora gerebant, quae conversa sint ex poena in aëream qualitatem, ut jam possint ab igne pati..."

Ficino maintained that, since the external form reflects the inner

⁸ Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, CXXII (Paris, 1864), cols. 838-39, 871 (Chap. 23: "Quomodo daemones percutiantur, deque daemoniaci a solido corpore differentia"). Cf. Ficino's translation of Psellus' *De Daemonibus*, printed with Iamblichus' *De Mysteriis Aegyptiorum, Chaldaeorum, Assyriorum* (Lugduni, 1577), cols. 335-36, 360-61:

"Non est autem corpus idem cognatum angelis atque daemonibus. Angelicum enim corpus radios quosdam effundens alternis oculis sustineri non potest, eis penitus evanescens: daemonicum verò si unquam tale fuerit, eloqui nescio. videtur autem tale aliquando extitisse, cum Isaias nominet angelum, qui cecidit, luciferum: nunc verò alioquin obscurum, tenebrosumque existit, ac si coniugato lumine nudatum oculis offeratur, molestum nobis occurrit... corpora verò daemoniaci... materialia quodammodo sunt, passionique subiecta, praesertim quaecunque loca subterranea subire. Haec enim adeo concreta sunt, ut tactui subiciantur, pulsataque doleant, igni propinquantia comburantur..."

"Daemonicum itaque corpus per totum se naturaliter sensuale secundum partes singulas absque medio videt, audit, tangit, patiturque tangendo, & divisum dolet, sicut & corpora solida. Sed hoc interest, quod corpora quidem solida, divisa cum sunt, aut vix, aut numquam restituantur, corpus verò daemonum, ubi secatur, mox in se iterum recreatur... Dolet tamen interea, dum dividitur, quamobrem aciem ferri metuit..." Cf. *Paradise Lost*, VI.327-53; and see West, p. 482.

⁹ Ralph Cudworth, *The True Intellectual System of the Universe*, III (London, 1845), 356-57. Cudworth also found support for this doctrine in Fulgentius' belief (*De Trinitate*, Book III) that angels "have ethereal or fiery bodies, but devils aerial" (p. 355) and in Jude vi ("the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation"). By sinning, the fallen angels lost "not only 'their dwelling-place' at large, those ethereal countries, and heavenly regions above, but also their proper dwelling-house, or immediate mansion; to wit their heavenly body... This, I say, was the natural consequence of these angels sinning, their leaving, or losing their pure and heavenly body, which became thereupon forthwith obscured and incrassated; the bodies of spirits incorporate always bearing a correspondent purity or impurity to the different disposition of their mind or soul. But then again... that which was thus in part the natural result of their sin, was also, by the just judgment of God, converted into their punishment; for their ethereal bodies being thus changed into gross, aerial, feculent, and vaporous, themselves were immediately hereupon, as St. Peter in the parallel passage expresseth it [2 Peter ii.4], *ταρταροθέτρες*, 'cast down into Tartarus...' (p. 363).

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 353-54. See Augustine's *De Genesi ad Litteram*, Book III, Chap. 10. Bodin likewise quoted Augustine's opinion: "Quò praestantior est uniuscuiusque natura, eò corpora sunt puriora: sic enim Augustinus, *Angelis malis*, inquit, *mutata sunt in casu corpora in deteriore qualitate aëris spissioris*... Idem paulò post, *Tenuia Angelorum corpora in deteriora & spissiora transformata sunt, quibus ab igne pati possent*." *Universae Naturae Theatrum*... Ioan. Bodino (Lugduni, 1596), p. 518. Bodin also cited the views of Porphyry and Philoponus: "Porphyrius in antro Homérico, animos ac daemones aërio corpore constare tradit: Philoponus quoque animas aëre crassiore vestiri, ut ab ignibus patiantur, quoniam, inquit, *intellectualis natura nihil alioquin à corpore pati posset*" (p. 519).

Cf. Ioannis Wieri *De Praestigiis Daemonum* (Basileae, 1577), col. 20: "Hi ergo spiritus antea divini, coelestes, puri, lucidi...angelicam essentiam non omnino perdidierunt: sed perditissimè, originali iusticia & lumine gratiae privati, vitiantur, denigrantque, ut iam aërei, mundani, obscuri, tenebrosi, &...immundi malique dicantur & sint..."

reality, good spirits possess beautiful shapes, while the bodies of evil demons are deformed:⁸

Summatim vero quaecumque sunt extrinsecus re vera pulchra, sunt et naturaliter intus bona: siquidem intimae formae perfectione atque victoria seminariae rationis super materiam provenit externa formositas. At si deficit species intima, tunc res ipsa et deminuta est a melioribus, id est, ab illis, quae sunt in gradu praestantiora: nec absolute pulchra est, sed pulchritudine mutilata. Unde Porphyrius daemones, quorum animi sunt iniqui, corpora quoque dicit habere deformia: quorum vero probi sunt animi, corpora insuper esse formosa. Et Origenes⁹ ex luce ordineque caelestium argumentatur, spiritus illis inesse Deo propinquiora [Ed. pr. propinquiores], lucidaeque intelligentiae compotes, atque una cum Apostolo Paulo spiritus a Deo longe degenerantes corporibus ex aëre caliginoso concretis includit... Turpe vero corpus est animae inpositae signum, et in habitum vel affectum dissonum jam prolapsae.¹⁰

According to Boehme's *Mysterium Magnum*,¹¹ Lucifer's fall consisted essentially in the obscuration of angelical by diabolical properties:

Thus this beautiful star did overshadow its light; and made its essence wholly astringent, rigorous and harsh; and its meekness and true angelical property was turned into an essence wholly austere, harsh, rigorous, and dark. (I, 50)

He was an angel, and hath belied his angelical form and obedience... in his centre he hath awakened the envious hateful forms and properties of the dark world, whence wrath and iniquity springeth. (I, 52)

His properties were as the venomous stings of serpents, which he put forth out of himself. When the love of God was withdrawn from him, he figured his image according to the property of the wrathful forms (wherein there are also evil beasts and worms, in the serpentine shape)... whence the combat arose, that the great prince Michael fought with him... (I, 52)

Thus the light was extinct to him [Lucifer], for he made his angelical essence... wholly rough, austere, cold, wrathful and fiery, in the dark wrathful property... and he became a devil; and was driven out of the angelical world... (I, 117)¹²

⁸ See notes 6 and 7 *supra* for the similar views of Cudworth and Bodin.

⁹ See also Huetius' *Origeniana* (*Patrologia Graeca*, XVII [Paris, 1857], col. 852): "Angelorum autem inter et daemonum corpus discrimen aliquod tenuitatis constituit, quoniam graviora, vel subtiliora corpora, pro criminum modo, mentibus addita fuisse opinatus est... Postquam enim ob nequitiam daemones coelo sunt exturbati, crassiore quodam corpore circumceptos esse existimavit. Sic ille tom i. in Ioan. num. 17: 'Ο καλούμενος δράκων ἄξιος γενέσθαι ἀποπεσὼν τῆς καθαρῆς ζωῆς πρὸ πάντων ἐνδεθῆναι ὅλη καὶ σώματι. Quod de diabolo statuit, de omnibus quoque daemonibus intelligendum est." Cf. Origen (*Patrologia Graeca*, XIV [Paris, 1862], col. 51): "primus eorum quae sunt in corpore, factus sit ille qui appellatur draco [Job iii: 8], nominatus etiam alicubi magnum cete, quod vicit Dominus. Sciendumque est necessario cum sancti vitam omnis materiae corporisque expertem in beatitudine traducerent, num is qui draco appellatur, posteaquam a vita pura excidit, dignus fuit qui ante omnia in materia et corpore ligatur." In Cudworth's opinion (pp. 347-48), Huetius misinterpreted Origen on this point.

¹⁰ Plotini *Opera Omnia... cum Marsilii Ficini Commentariis et ejusdem Interpretatione Castigata*, ed. Fridericus Creuzer (Oxford, 1835), I, 357.

¹¹ Jacob Boehme, *Mysterium Magnum or an Explanation of the First Book of Moses Called Genesis*, trans. John Sparrow, ed. C. J. B. (London, 1924).

¹² Hughes (p. 93) has noted additional parallels in Boehme's *Description of the Three Principles of the Divine Essence*. See also *Paradise Lost*, ed. Merritt Y. Hughes (New York, 1935), p. 332 n.

Batman uppon Bartholome quoted St. Gregory the Great and St. John Damascene on Lucifer's transformation from angel to fiend:

The head of these evill spirites and leader, is *Lucifer*, the which as *Gregory* saith, hath that name, for he was made more cleere and bright then other Angells. For the first Angell was beautified as a precious stone: for whilest he was above all the companies of Angells, by comparison he was the more bright and cleere then they. But he waxing proud against his Creator, lost light and cleerenesse, and fairenesse: and as he was worthy he gate him a foule darke shape of Apostacie. Thereof speaketh *Domas. li. i. Chap. 18.*... He was of the creator made light, and by his owne will he became darknesse...¹³

Vondel cited St. Bernard's comment on Lucifer's degeneration: "The source of all transgression is pride, which hath overcast Lucifer himself, shining most splendidly amongst the stars, with eternal darkness. Not only an Angel, but the chief among Angels, it hath changed into a Devil."¹⁴

Reginald Scot declared that "the shapes and various likenesses of Devils" correspond to "their various capacities in wickedness... resembling spiritually some horrid and ugly monsters, as their conspiracies against the power of God, were high and monstrous, when they fell from Heaven..."¹⁵ When conjured, they appear in shapes "answerable to the cause of their Fall, and the Dominions to which they belong" (p. 524).

[The] opinion of the antients is, That according to the division of the clean and unclean Beasts in the Law given unto *Moses*, the Shapes of Devils are disposed in the Infernal Kingdom: So that the most perverse and potent among the Devils represent the most ugly and mischievous among the Beasts, according to the following division; viz. such Devils as *Astaroth, Lucifer, Bardon, Powmoh*, who incline men and instigate them to pride and presumptuousness, have the shapes of Horses, Lyons, Tygars, Wolves[.] Such as instigate to Lust and Covetousness have the forms of Hogs, Serpents, and other filthy reptiles or envious Beasts, as Dogs, Cats, Vultures, Snakes, &c. Such as incline to Murther, have the shapes of every Bird and Beast of prey. (p. 525)

Thomas Heywood¹⁶ quoted Dante's description of Lucifer ("L'Imperador del Doloroso Regno," *Inferno*, Canto XXXIV, lines 28 ff.) to illustrate his hideousness after his fall:

Of the Rebellious, *Lucifer* is prime
Captaine and King....
And as in his Creation he was fram'd
More glorious far than others before-nam'd;

¹³ *Batman uppon Bartholome* (London, 1582), p. 10.

¹⁴ *Vondel's Lucifer*, trans. Leonard Charles Van Noppen (New York, 1898), pp. 249-50. Wierus (col. 19) quoted a similar comment by Augustine (*Tract. in Joan. 42*): "Quaeris unde diabolus? Inde utique, unde & caeteri angeli. Sed caeteri angeli in sua obedientia perstiterunt, ille inobediendo & superbiendo lapsus est angelus, & factus est diabolus." Cf. Joseph Hall, *Works*, ed. Philip Wynter, VII (Oxford, 1863), 581-82: "The angels... long since, are ugly devils...."

¹⁵ Reginald Scot, *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, ed. Brinsley Nicholson (London, 1886), p. 493.

¹⁶ Thomas Heywood, *The Hierarchie of the Blessed Angells*, [and] *The Fall of Lucifer with his Angels* (London, 1635), pp. 412-13. Heywood went on to explain Dante's description allegorically (pp. 413-14).

More goodly featur'd, beautifull, and bright,
 And therefore had his name deriv'd from Light:
 So since his Fall, there's nothing we can stile
 So ougly foule, abominably vile;
 The putred Fountaine, and bitumenous Well,
 From whence all Vice and malefactures swell.
 Whose horrid shape, and qualities infest,
 Are by the Poet *Dantes* thus exprest. . .

(p. 412)

Heywood further observed that, whereas the good angels "still take the shape of Man," the "bad Daemons"

In figures more contemptible appeare,
 One like a Wolfe, another like a Beare:
 Others resembling Dogs, Apes, Monckies, Cats,
 And sometimes Birds, as Crowes, Pies, Owles, and Bats.

(p. 580)

Aesthetic principles also influenced representations of Satan and his followers. The physical contrast between the good and evil angels symbolized the moral gulf between them. Valvasone called attention to this principle: "ed è permesso anco a' pittori di dipinger gli angeli buoni di corpo tutti risplendenti e belli, ed i cattivi, all' incontro, della più spaventevol forma che imaginar si sanno."¹⁷ Vondel likewise recognized the importance of emphasizing the ethical distinction between good and evil spirits:

We should also make distinction between the two kinds of characters who contend on this stage; namely, the bad and the good Angels, each kind playing its own role, even as Cicero and our inborn sense of verisimilitude teach us to picture each character according to his rank and nature. (pp. 251-52)

In his dialogue *Il Figino, ovvero del fine della pittura*,¹⁸ Comanini extolled Vida's¹⁹ and Tasso's²⁰ grotesque descriptions of the devils and specifically commended Figino's contrasting portraits of Michael and Satan:

Ma fra tutte le più strane, & horrende viste, delle quali sogliono gli huomini spaventarsi maggiormente, & raccapricciarsene, niuna ve n'hà, che possa agguagliarsi à quella de gli spirti Demoniaci, quando appariscono sotto mille brutte forme a' nostri occhi. Non dimendo [*sic*] l'idolo, che 'l Vida fà de' Demonij nel primo della Christeida, pur piace, & diletta. . . La qual descrizione fu poi trasferita, ovvero imitata dal Tasso nel quarto della sua Gierusalemme liberata. . . (pp. 57-58)

Che poi gli angeli delle tenebre habbiano tal volta preso sembianze horribili per ispaventar l'huomo, ce ne fanno certissima fede l'histoire, & particolarmente quella di S. Girolamo, il quale tra le vite di Santi Padri, v'instà quella di S. Antonio Abbate, scritta da Athanasio Vescovo; in cui leggesi, che 'l Diavolo sovente apparive à quel gran Santo in quella forma, la quale dal Tasso, & prima da Monsignor Vida è stata imitata, & alla quale voi Figino vi siete accostato nella pittura, che fatta havete di Lucifero sotto i piè dell' angel Michele su la

¹⁷ Erasmo di Valvasone, *L'Angeleida*, ed. G. Polidori (London, 1842), p. xxvi.

¹⁸ Gregorio Comanini, *Il Figino, ovvero del fine della pittura* (Mantova, 1591).

¹⁹ See Vida's *Christiados*, Book I, lines 139-55.

²⁰ Torquato Tasso, *Gerusalemme Liberata*, Canto IV, Stanzas 4-8.

tavola della Cappella dal Collegio de' Dottori in questa città: dove per meglio esprimere la grandezza della superbia Satanica, havete fatto quella figura d'aspre membra, nerboruta, horrenda d'aspetto, negra nel volto, di chiome hispide, con le corna in fronte, & nelle parti di basso somigliante ad un Satiro: sì come per lo contrario per discoprire la bontà, & gagliardezza del combattitor Michele, havete di modo temperato lo stile in formarne l'immagine; che l'aspetto è delicato sì; ma tuttavia spirante ancora un non sò che di fiera... & le membra son belle sì, ma nondimeno robuste. (pp. 63-64)

Another significant influence on the development of this tradition was the Biblical account of the "war in heaven" (Revelation xii.7-9). Since this passage referred specifically to Satan as "dragon" and "serpent," Scripture itself seemed to testify to his monstrous appearance: "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

Valvasone regarded this passage as authority for his own description of the rebel angels as monstrous beasts:

Concludo dunque che volendo io parlar poeticamente degli angeli, ragionevolmente ne ho parlato sotto le immagini da me descritte; e tanto più il posso aver fatto quanto ho l'esempio ed autorità di san Giovanni che nella sua Apocalisse chiama Lucifero Dragone, e gli attribuisce corna, corona e coda ed altre cose appartenenti a corpi sodi... (p. xxvi)

Vondel likewise cited this text as license for endowing the devils with animal forms: "St. John, in his Revelation, typifies the holy mysteries and the war in Heaven by the Dragon, whose tail drew after him a third part of the stars, supposed by the theologians to refer to the fallen Angels..." (p. 251). Moreover, illustrations of St. Michael's victory over the devil—a popular iconographical motif—often followed their Biblical source in portraying Satan as a dragon.

The contrast between the original beauty and subsequent hideousness of Lucifer and his angels was a familiar theme in medieval and Renaissance literature.²¹ According to Guido delle Colonne, God punished Satan's transgression by turning him into a serpent or dragon:

ille angelus qui omnibus aliis angelis fuit prelati. ... Hic elatus superbie... ab eterna benedictione cecidit cum legionibus suis et dyabolus et dyaboli facti sunt. ... Hic fuit ille leviathan de quo dicit iob. ... Scripsit enim ysidorus ethimologiarum quod hebrei hebrea voce vocant illum beemoth quod latina lingua sonat animal brutum. E[st] enim spiritus malus immundicia et spurcicia plenus et ideo deus ab ipso principio deiectionis eius convertit ipsum in animal brutum id est in serpentem tortuosum et cum sit immense magnitudinis dictus est draco. ... Hic est ille leviathan qui factus serpens a sue deiectionis principio invidens glorie primorum parentum nostrorum ausus est voluptatis paradysum intrare et... parentes nostros cecis temptationibus vicio prevaricationis affecit. ... Unde quitquid [sic] nobis catholicis per has sacras scripturas notum est certum est quod ille leviathan id est dyabolorum princeps a culmine celesti deiectus vel per seipsum corporaliter factus serpens vel serpentem ingressus est...²²

²¹ Cf. the Old English Genesis, lines 67-71, 254-56. George Philip Krapp, ed., *Junius Manuscript* (New York, 1937), pp. 4, 12.

²² *Lydgate's Troy-Book*, ed. Henry Bergen, Part IV, EETS, extra series, CXXVI (London, 1935), 141-42.

Lydgate's *Pilgrimage of the Life of Man* reported that, though Lucifer was once "bryd ful cler and bryht, And passyngly ffayr unto the syght," now "he ys blak, and more horryble Than any deth, also mor terryble."²³ In Dante's opinion,

S' ei fu sì bel com' egli è ora brutto
e contra il suo Fattore alzò le ciglia,
ben dee da lui procedere ogni lutto.
(*Inferno*, Canto XXXIV, lines 34-36)

Richard Rolle declared that the devils became disfigured through sin:

But I wille shew yhow aparty
Why þai er swa foul and grisly,
For sum tyme þai war bright angels,
Als þa er þat now in heven duels,
Fra þat blisful place thurgh syn þai felle,
And bycome þan foule devels of helle,
And horribely defygurd, thurgh syn
þat þai war wyth-fild and hardened þarin.
For warne syn war þai had ay bene
Bright aungels, als þai war first sene;
And now er þai made foule and ugly
Thurgh fylyng of þair syn only,
þan is syn mar foule and wlatsume,
þan any devel þat out of helle may come . . .²⁴

According to *Purity*, the rebel angels were transformed at the moment of their expulsion from heaven:

þas þe feloun were so fers for his fayre wedez
And his glorious glem þat glent so bryst,
As sone as Dry3tynex dome drof to hymselfen,
þikke þowsandez þro þrwen þeroute,
Fellen fro þe fyrmament fendez ful blake,
[S]weved at þe fyrst swap as þe snaw þikke,
Hurled into helle-hole as þe hyve swarmez.²⁵

Several mystery plays likewise represented the metamorphosis of the angels as contemporary with their fall. The York play, "The Creation, and the Fall of Lucifer," contains a stage direction to this effect:

Primus angelus deficiens,
Lucifer.
Secundus angelus deficiens.

Each changes into
diabolus in inferno.²⁶

After first boasting of his beauty as "Primus angelus deficiens," Lucifer reappeared as "deiabolus in inferno" (p. 5), lamenting his hideous change:

²³ John Lydgate, *Pilgrimage of the Life of Man*, Part II, EETS, extra series, LXXXIII (London, 1901), 380.

²⁴ Richard Rolle de Hampole, *Pricke of Conscience*, ed. Richard Morris (Berlin, 1863), p. 64.

²⁵ *Purity*, ed. Robert J. Menner, Yale Studies in English, LXI (New Haven, 1920), 10-11.

Whare es my kynde be-come, so cumly and clere,
 Now I am laytheeste, allas! Pat are was lighte.
 My bryghtnes es blakkeste and blo nowe;
 My bale es ay betande any brynande....

(p. 5)

In the *Ludus Coventriae*, Lucifer's transformation occurred at the moment of his banishment from Heaven:

At thy byddyng þi wyl I werke
 And pas fro joy to payne smerte
 now I am a devyl ful derke
 Pat was An Aungell bryht.²⁷

In the Towneley play of "The Creation," the fallen rebels reproached Lucifer for the loss of their beauty and for his own transition from angel to fiend:

We, that were angels so fare,
 And sat so hie above the ayere,
 Now ar we waxen blak as any coyll,
 and ugly, tatyrd as a foyll.
 What alyd the, lucifer to fall?
 was thou now farist of angels all?
 thou art foull comyn from thi kyn;
 thou art fallen, that was the teynd,
 ffrom an angell to a feynd.²⁸

The apocryphal *Book of John the Evangelist* described Satan's metamorphosis as immediately prior to his fall:

And I asked of the Lord: When Satan fell, in what place dwelt he? And he answered me: My Father changed his appearance because of his pride, and the light was taken from him, and his face became like unto heated iron, and his face became wholly like that of a man: and he drew with his tail the third part of the angels of God, and was cast out from the seat of God and from the stewardship of the heavens.²⁹

To the traditional Islamic doctrine that Iblis fell because he refused to revere the clay from which man was to be created, *The Gospel of Barnabas* added the following account of his transformation:

They that loved God bowed themselves, but Satan, with them that were of his mind, said: "O Lord, we are spirit, and therefore it is not just that we should do reverence to this clay." Having said this, Satan became horrid and of fearsome look, and his followers became hideous; because for their rebellion God took away from them the beauty wherewith he had endued them in creating them. Whereat the holy angels, when, lifting their heads, they saw how terrible a monster Satan had become, and his followers, cast down their face to earth in fear.

²⁶ Lucy Toulmin Smith, ed., *York Plays* (Oxford, 1885), p. 1.

²⁷ *Ludus Coventriae*, ed. K. S. Block, EETS, extra series, CXX (London, 1922), 19.

²⁸ *Towneley Plays*, ed. George England, EETS, extra series, LXXI (London, 1897), 5.

²⁹ Montague Rhodes James, ed., *Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford, 1924), p. 189. In James's opinion (p. 187), the Latin text of this book can hardly be older than the twelfth century; the original version, however, may have belonged to the sixth or seventh century.

Then said Satan: "O Lord, thou hast unjustly made me hideous, but I am content thereat, because I desire to annul all that thou shalt do."⁸⁰

Like their medieval predecessors, Renaissance writers and artists usually regarded Satan's metamorphosis as complete at the time of his fall or, at the latest, before his temptation of Eve. In Floris de Vriendt's painting "De Engelenval,"⁸¹ Lucifer—expelled from Heaven by Michael and his angels—has been transformed into a seven-headed dragon. His companions, despite their human torsos, possess the heads, claws, and tails of beasts. In Andreini's *L'Adamo* the fallen rebels have already suffered their sea change before their initial appearance on earth to seduce man; in the very first act they lament their altered shape:

E'n vece d'aureo crine,
E d'Angelico aspetto,
Viperino è 'l capel, lo sguardo bieco,
Apre il volto cruccioso un' aria fosca,
Gravida di bestemmie è ogn' hor la bocca,
E bestemmiente sbocca,
Sulfureo nembo, schifa bava, e foco:
Son d'aquila le man, di capra il piede,
L'ali di vipistrello, e al fin l'albergo
Un tartaro profondo, infausto, ed atro. . . .⁸²

In Vondel's version, Lucifer, smitten by Michael, was hurled from his chariot and transformed into a "hideous medley of seven beasts," symbolic of the seven deadly sins:

Gelyck de klaere dagh in naeren nacht verkeert,
Wanneer de son verzinckt, vergeet met gout te brallen;
Zoo wort zyn schoonheit oock, in 't zincken, onder 't vallen,
In een wanschapeheit verandert, al te vuil;
Dat helder aengezicht in eenen wreedten muil;
De tanden in gebit, gewet om staal te knaauwen;
De voeten en de hant in vierderhande klauwen;
Dat glinstrend parlemoer in eene zwarte huilt.
De rugh, vol borstlen, spreit twee draeckveleugels uit.
In 't kort, d'Aertsengel, wien noch flus alle Englen vieren,

⁸⁰ Lonsdale and Laura Ragg, ed., *Gospel of Barnabas* (Oxford, 1907), p. 81. The editors (pp. xlii-xliv) regard the text as a Venetian copy of a Tuscan original composed between 1300 and 1350 A.D. Cf. Mahomet Rabadan, *Mahometism Fully Explained*, trans. Joseph Morgan, I (London, 1723), 26: "The accursed Squadron, who before their Fall were so gloriously beautiful, were transformed into such hideously frightful and monstrous Appearances, and so much disfigured from what they once were, that Imagination itself can comprehend nothing which may be compared to have any Similitude, or bear any manner of Resemblance to them: So ugly were their Forms and Countenances, and so unaccountable the Alteration, that nothing can be thought on, which with any Likeness may be justly apply'd." Morgan's introduction (pp. vii-viii) declares that Rabadan's manuscript was written in 1603 in Spanish by "one of those seemingly converted *Moors*, called by the *Spaniards* CHRISTIANOS NUEVOS. . . ."

⁸¹ No. 112 in the Royal Museum, Antwerp.

⁸² Giovanni Battista Andreini, *L'Adamo Sacra Rappresentazione* (Milano, 1617), p. 15. Cf. the grotesque illustrations of the devils in the accompanying plates by Cesare Bassano. For an English translation, see Watson Kirkconnell, *Celestial Cycle* (Toronto, 1952), pp. 235-39.

Verwisselt zyn gedaente, en mengelt zeven dieren
 Afgrypslyck onder een, naer uiterlycken schyn:
 Een' leeu, vol hoovaerdy, een vraetigh, gulzigh zwyn,
 Een' traegen ezel, een rinoceros, van toren
 Ontsteeken, eene sim, van achter en van voren
 Al even schaemteloos, en geil en heet van aert,
 Een' draeck, vol nyts, een' wolf en vrecken gierigaert.
 Nu is die schoonheit maer een ondiër, te verwenschen,
 Te vloecken, zelf van Godt, van Geesten, en van menschen.
 Dat ondiër yst, indien 't de blicken op zich slaet,
 En deekt met damp en mist sijn gruwelyck gelaet.³³

His companions were similarly disfigured:

De monsters, in het licht geklautert, help aen 't hollen,
 En groeide in zulck een jaght. . . .
 Wat green hier overal, waer 't op een vlughten ging,
 Een wilde woestheit, een gestaltverwisseling,
 In leden en in leest! Men hoortze brullen, bassen.
 (Poelhekke, p. 514; cf. Van Noppen, p. 421)

In Valvasone's *L'Angeleida*, the rebel angels had lost their pristine shapes before assembling for battle against the loyal spirits. Forfeiting their former beauty, they had assumed the forms of Harpies, Gorgons, Sphinxes, Hydras, Minotaurs, Centaurs, Chimeras, birds of ill-omen, satyrs, sea-beasts, and other monsters (pp. 37-39):

Puro candor di mattutin sereno
 Allor che all' alba, il più temprato Maggio,
 Amoroso piacer versa dal seno,
 Non cominciò mai di con sì bel raggio,
 Ch' allo splendor, al candido che avieno
 Gli angeli in sè, potesse far paraggio,
 Allor che usciti dall' eccelsa mano
 Dì Dio, pargoleggiar nel ciel sovrano.

Ma poi che troppo in se medesmi intenti
 Conobber mal la lor bellezza altera,
 E non furo a sperar dubbiosi e lenti
 Quel sommo onor che solo in Dio s'invera,
 Tutte le membra lor, già sì lucenti,
 Notte cosperse spaventosa e nera,
 E mani e piè divini, ed ale e volti
 Furon diversamente in bruti volti.

(pp. 36-37)

Lucifer had become a seven-headed monster with a hundred arms and a bull's tail—a hideous compound of Briareus (or Aegaeon)³⁴ and the dragon of the Apocalypse:³⁵

Tra questi e quelli, empio gigante ed alto
 Con cento braccia il crudo duce sorge;
 Coperto il petto di ferrigno smalto,

³³ F. J. Poelhekke, *Vondel's Dichtjuweelen* (Leiden, 1907), pp. 513-14. Cf. Van Noppen's translation, pp. 419-20, and Kirkconnell, pp. 414-15.

³⁴ For this hundred-handed giant, who rebelled against Jupiter, see *Natalis Comitis Mythologiae* (Frankfurt, 1584), pp. 89-90; cf. Kirkconnell, pp. 81-82.

³⁵ Revelation xii.3: "a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads."

Cinquanto scudi a sua difesa porge;
Arme cinquanta avventa al fiero assalto,
Ed in lui solo un gran niisto si scorge
Di tutto il reo, di tutto il truce; e solo
Mostro è de' mostri del suo vario stuolo.

Sovr' esso il nero e smisurato busto,
Sette teste il crudel corona d'auro,
Ma l'auro splende d'un colore adusto
Qual il volto miriam di fosco Mauro:
Gli cade poi dal deretan del fusto
Infin al suolo gran coda di tauro
Che 'l terzo dietro strascinando tragge
De' lumi ond' ardon le celesti spiagge.

Da' sette spechi delle bocche spira
Lezzo crudel che densa bava attosca:
Vibran quattordici occhi orribil ira
Dal fiero ciglio che lo sguardo imbosca:
Per le livide guance erra e s'aggira
Un sembiante sdegnoso, un' ira fosca
Che alberga in mezzo la Mestizia, e gli empie
Di serpentino crin l'orride tempie. (p. 42)

Valmarana's *Daemonomachia*, on the other hand, presented Lucifer's metamorphosis in two phases. While he was exhorting his troops before battle, horns burst suddenly from his forehead:

Erigit, haec fatus, bellantia signa superbus
Cornua, quae frontem tum primum visa minacem
Rumpere...³⁸

Afterwards, in the ensuing conflict with Michael, the two-edged sword of the Word of God destroyed his remaining beauty:

adversis radijs exarsit, & omnes
Exuit infelix formosae mentis honores
Lucifer, & quicquid [*sic*] caelestibus hauserat oris,
Angelicumque decus furiales vertit in artus:
Tum vero attonitus monstros, seque ipse per horrens...
Lucifer... solo iam nomine talis,
Evolat, oblitusque animi indignantia linquit
Sydera... (pp. 28-29)

After his expulsion from Heaven, he had still to endure Nature's sarcastic comment on his altered appearance:

At qualis, quantusque venis? quam dispar ab illo,
Quem modo nutantes coeli timere Tyrannum?
Quo decor egregius membris, suavesque colores
Totaque maiestas abiit? vigor igneus oris,
Ambrosijque nitor capitis, divesque thiaras
Quo abscessere loco? quidve est haec cornua fronti?
Formosos artus quis sic ferrugine pinxit?
Quis terror placido spoliavit lumine visus?
(p. 31)

³⁸ Odoricus Valmarana, *Primae Partis Daemonomachiae sive de bello intelligentiarum* (Bon., 1623), p. 25.

Despite minor variations as to the time and nature of Lucifer's metamorphosis, medieval and Renaissance writers and artists usually regarded his transformation as prior to, or simultaneous with, his fall. Paintings and literary versions of his rebellion and expulsion almost invariably depicted him as a deformed monster. Lorenzo Lotto's picture of "St. Michael Pursuing Lucifer" was one of the rare exceptions. Though falling headlong through space, Lucifer still retains his angelic form. "Contrary to the Renaissance tradition of representing Lucifer as a monster," declared Berenson, "Lotto shows him as an angel of great beauty."⁸⁷ Such an interpretation stands in striking contrast with the more conventional treatment of this subject by Raphael and Figino.

Milton's chief contribution to this tradition was an innovation in timing. Unlike his predecessors, who had conceived Satan's metamorphosis as simultaneous either with his revolt or with his fall, the author of *Paradise Lost* deferred the transformation of the rebel angels until after the temptation and fall of man.

This variation possessed several distinct advantages over the conventional chronology. In the first place, it reflected a shift in emphasis from Lucifer's rebellion in Heaven to his transgression in Eden. Though Christian tradition had usually interpreted the devil's deformity as a punishment for his initial revolt, Milton preferred to present it in a new light, as the penalty for an entirely different crime, the seduction of mankind. After all, he was writing not an *Angeleida*, but an *Adamo*. His announced argument was not the angelic rebellion, but "Man's First Disobedience." It was, accordingly, both logical and appropriate that he should transfer Satan's metamorphosis from the revolt of the angels until after the fall of man. The former incident was, after all, only an episode in his epic, rather than an integral part of his fable; the latter event, however, marked the successful completion of the devil's primary enterprise in *Paradise Lost*.

Milton's altered chronology lent additional significance to Satan's serpentine form. In describing the rebel leader as a "monstrous Serpent" or dragon, Milton had, of course, the authority of Revelation xii:9 and xx:2 ("the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan"), as well as the tradition represented by Guido delle Colonne and others.⁸⁸ In its new context, however, his shape possessed a special relevance to his felony in Eden. His punishment fitted his crime. As he was "punisht in the shape he sinn'd, According to his doom," his penalty recalled not only his transgression in Book IX, but also the divine verdict already pronounced on the serpent earlier

⁸⁷ Bernard Berenson, *Lorenzo Lotto* (London, 1956), p. 133 and Plate 371. The painting is in the Palazzo Apostolico at Loreto.

⁸⁸ See Huetius and Origen, *supra*. Cf. Wierus, col. 19: "Hic draco ille magnus, in terram proiectus cum suis angelis, serpens antiquus, qui vocatur Diabolus & Satanas, ut Ioannes ait, tortuosus serpens Esaiae." Richard Greenham (*Workes* [London, 1612], p. 845) observed that "The Divell is called *Daimōn*

in Book X. Since the nature, as well as the timing, of Satan's metamorphosis linked his disfigurement specifically with his central action in the poem (the temptation of Eve), Milton had excellent reasons for depicting the fallen Archangel in serpentine form rather than in the more bizarre shapes described by Vida, Valvasone, and Vondel.

A second advantage of Milton's innovation in chronology was that it permitted him to reduce the infernal victory to its true dimensions—to reassert eternal Providence in spite of Hell's apparent triumph. The subject and genre of *Paradise Lost* made it virtually impossible to avoid conceding the devil a major, albeit temporary, victory. The Bible itself testified to the success of his strategy against Adam and Eve. On the other hand, his ultimate defeat necessarily lay outside the scope of the fable.^{88a} To have introduced Christ's future victories directly would have violated the unities of time and action.⁸⁹ Indeed, the fable of *Paradise Lost* covered a period of slightly more than a week. In order to mitigate the inevitable impression of demonic triumph, to invalidate Satan's apparent victory by exposing its ultimate futility, Milton resorted to literary artifice. Deferring Satan's transformation until the moment of success and thereby converting triumph to shame, he managed to divert emphasis from the devil's victory to the overruling power of Providence. The effectiveness of this scene depended largely on his mastery of timing.

Thirdly, the intrusion of divine judgment at this moment served to dissipate the illusion of heroism which still clung to the fallen Archangel. His degradation at the instant of declaring his success constituted a final, definitive verdict on his own merits and those of his enterprise. It unmasked his heroic pretense as vicious reality.

Fourthly, the episode acquired considerable dramatic value through this sudden "reversal of intention." Aristotle had defined peripeteia as a "change by which the action veers round to its opposites" (Butcher, p. 41). This was one of the hallmarks of the "complex"

of his great knowledge and great experience...; for his forme and ugly shape, the Prince of darkenes;... for his hurting, a serpent: for his experience in hurting, an old serpent..." In his poem "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity," Milton referred to Satan as "Th'old Dragon under ground," who "Swindges the scaly Horror of his fouled tail."

Hughes (p. 93) has called attention to Origen's identification of Ophioneus ("the serpent deity, who—according to Pherecydes—led the Titans in an unsuccessful attack on Olympus") with the serpent who deceived Eve. Wierus (col. 19) makes the same identification: "Hunc [Diabolum] casum non solum nostri & Hebraeorum Theologi docent: verum etiam Assyrii, Arabes, Aegyptij & Graeci suis dogmatibus confirmant... Pherecydes item daemonum lapsum describit: & Ophin, hoc est serpentem daemoniacum, rebellantis, & a divinae mentis placito deficientis exercitus caput & antesignanum fuisse tradit."

^{88a} See also John Peter, *A Critique of Paradise Lost* (New York and London, 1960), p. 143.

⁸⁹ For the principle of unity of action in the epic, see S. H. Butcher, *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art*, 3rd edition (London, 1902), pp. 35, 89-91. For unity of time in epic poetry, see R. A. Sayce, *The French Biblical Epic in the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, 1955), p. 21; Ronsard, Chapelain, and several other critics and poets regarded a year as the maximum time limit for the epic action.

type of plot (p. 39) which he preferred over the "simple" model (p. 45). The sudden reversal which Waldock regarded as reminiscent of the comic cartoon was actually a thoroughly respectable literary device. Behind it lay the authority of Aristotle and many of his Renaissance commentators.

The episode was a clear-cut example of "reversal of intention." Expecting applause, Satan received the opposite:

he stood, expecting
Thir universal shout and high applause
To fill his ear, when contrary he hears
On all sides, from innumerable tongues
A dismal universal hiss, the sound
Of public scorn. . . .

Thus was th' applause they meant,
Turn'd to exploding hiss, triumph to shame
Cast on themselves from their own mouths.
(lines 504-509, 545-47)

The scene met both of Aristotle's requirements for a peripeteia. It achieved surprise (Butcher, p. 43), and it avoided violating "our rule of probability or necessity" (p. 41). The element of surprise proceeded largely from Milton's innovation in timing, probability from the long and well-established tradition of angelic metamorphosis.

Nevertheless, he had also enhanced its probability through some adroit foreshadowing. The metamorphosis in Book X was not the first physical penalty which Satan and his angels suffered for their transgressions. Even in the battle in Heaven, their bodies had grown "gross by sinning" (VI.661) and vulnerable to pain (VI.327). His expulsion from Heaven left him "chang'd in outward lustre" and with "th' excess of Glory obscur'd." Even though "his form had yet not lost All her Original brightness," it was nonetheless darkened. In Book IV, Zephon commented on his altered appearance:

Think not, revolted Spirit, thy shape the same,
Or undiminisht brightness, to be known
As when thou stood'st in Heav'n upright and pure;
That Glory then, when thou no more wast good,
Departed from thee, and thou resembl'st now
Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foul.
(lines 835-40)

Gabriel likewise noted his "faded splendor wan." Satan's companions—"Thir Glory witherd"—suffered a similar diminution of luster.

Instead of completing Lucifer's metamorphosis at the time of his expulsion, Milton depicted his gradual degeneration in several stages: (1) a grossness of texture as early as the angelic war; (2) the partial obscuration of his brightness with his fall; and finally (3) his transformation into a serpent at the conclusion of his enterprise against man.

Atlanta, Georgia

THE SAGA AF TRISTRAM OK ISODD SUMMARY OR SATIRE?

By PAUL SCHACH

The *Saga af Tristram ok Isodd* is among the most interesting of the Icelandic prose narratives known as *lygisögur*. As Stefán Einarsson recently noted, these "lying stories," over two hundred of which have not even been edited, are still a "wide open field for study."¹ Indeed, they represent one of the least explored and potentially most fruitful areas of research for students of Germanic philology, Icelandic and comparative literature, and folklore. The surprising neglect of these tales is probably due in large measure to their vastly inferior merit as narrative art compared with the consummate craftsmanship of the best of the *Íslendinga sögur* (Family Sagas) and Snorri Sturluson's *Heimskringla*.

But the intrinsic worth of a work of literature is not the only measure of its importance for the scholar. As literary monuments *Njáls saga* and *Egils saga* rank with Gottfried's *Tristan* and Wolfram's *Parzival*; and *Hrafnkels saga* is certainly one of the finest *Novellen* written during the Middle Ages. Yet it was not primarily the realistic, native Family Sagas which provided the inspiration and subject matter for the *rímur*, one of Iceland's most characteristic literary forms, but the fantastic *lygisögur*, fashioned from the "flotsam and jetsam" washed ashore by the "great tide of foreign romance."² This fact and the continued popularity of the "lying stories" for more than five centuries are an index of literary taste too important to be disregarded by the literary historian.

Derived from the northern *forðaldarsögur* (heroic sagas) and the southern *riddarasögur* (romances of chivalry) and later on from Danish-German chapbooks, the *lygisögur* are a veritable treasure house of loanwords, names, situations, and themes from many centuries and climes, waiting to be explored and exploited by students of various disciplines. Occasionally these stories make it possible to reconstruct, at least in rough outline, lost originals which survive only in the mangled form of this genre.³ Frequently they help us trace the

¹ *History of Icelandic Literature* (New York, 1957), p. 165. See also A. LeRoy Andrews, "The *Lygisögur*," *Publications of the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study*, II (1914-15), 255-63; and Margaret Schlauch, *Romance in Iceland* (New York, 1934), Chaps. I and VIII.

² *History of Icelandic Literature*, pp. 165 and 169.

³ See *Romance in Iceland*, p. 65. Even more important than the *lygisögur* in this respect are the *riddarasögur*. *Tristrams saga*, for example, is the only complete member of the Thomas group of Tristan romances. On this point see P. G. Foote, "The Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle in Iceland," *London Mediaeval Studies* (1959), pp. v-vi, and the literature cited there.

often startling transmutation of the matter of heroic legend and chivalric romance into *rímur*, ballads, and folk tales.

The saga under consideration is a case in point, standing as it does between the Norwegian *Tristrams saga ok Ísöndar* (adapted by Brother Róbert in 1226 from the Anglo-Norman Tristran epic of Thomas of Brittany) and the later Icelandic *stjúpusögur* (step-mother tales) of Tistram and Ísól. Furthermore, careful study of the manner of construction of these sagas, which in many ways is not unlike that of popular television plays, may *mutatis mutandis* throw welcome light on the method of composition of intrinsically more important works farther removed in time. For all of these reasons and many more, the *lygisögur* need to be thoroughly examined.

The only comprehensive work in the field to date is the stimulating study of Margaret Schlauch, *Romance in Iceland*, which brilliantly continues the pioneering investigation included in Henry Goddard Leach's monumental *Angevin Britain and Scandinavia*. But *Romance in Iceland* is, as the author herself emphasized, "a mere preliminary survey of a vast field which still awaits detailed investigation." A definitive history of the genre would be a major contribution to the intellectual history of the North. Before such a historical treatment can be undertaken, however, many more critical editions and careful analyses of the individual stories will have to be made.

Written *circa* 1400, the *Saga af Tristram* is preserved in two complete manuscripts: a vellum from the middle of the fifteenth century and a paper transcript from about 1850 which differs from the vellum in a number of interesting details.⁴ The saga was edited from the vellum by Gisli Brynjúlfsson with Danish translation in 1851, and reprinted in modern Icelandic orthography by Bjarni Vilhjálmsson in the sixth volume of his popular edition of the *Ríddarasögur*.⁵ In the discursive *Bemærkninger* appended to his edition, Brynjúlfsson devotes less than half a page to the saga itself. Kölbing gives a brief outline summary of the story, unfortunately not free of mistakes, in his edition of *Tristrams saga ok Ísöndar*.⁶ Even less accurate are the few comments made by Golther in his *Tristan und Isolde in den Dichtungen des Mittelalters und der Neuen Zeit* (pp. 185-86). The best treatment is that of Leach, who summarizes the plot of the *Saga af Tristram* with special emphasis on its deviations from *Tristrams saga*.⁷ Strangely enough, Margaret Schlauch does not even mention the *Saga af Tristram*, nor does Jan de Vries in his *Altnordische Literaturgeschichte*.

⁴ The vellum, AM 489, quarto, is in the Arna-Magnæan Collection in Copenhagen; the paper manuscript, Lbs 2316, quarto, is in the National Library in Reykjavík.

⁵ Brynjúlfsson's edition appeared in the *Annaler for Nordisk Oldkyndighed* (Copenhagen, 1851), pp. 1-160; the *Ríddarasögur* were published in Reykjavík, 1954.

⁶ In *Die nordische und die englische Version der Tristan-Sage* (Heilbronn, 1878), pp. xv-xvii.

⁷ *Angevin Britain* (New York, 1921), pp. 184-87.

Despite the superficial treatment which has been accorded this saga, the most diverse conjectures have been made regarding its relation to *Tristrams saga*, to the folk tales, and to *Tristrams kvæði*, one of the most poignantly beautiful ballads in the Icelandic language. Apparently misled by features of style and by the age and state of preservation of the manuscripts, Brynjúlfsson, in the foreword to his edition, declared that the *Saga of Tristram* was older than *Tristrams saga*. This position is, of course, untenable. We know that *Tristrams saga*, although considerably condensed, faithfully follows the original of Thomas. While working on his edition of the *Saga of Tristram*, Brynjúlfsson came to realize the impossibility of deriving *Tristrams saga* from the greatly abbreviated Icelandic version. Without deleting the above statement in the foreword, he expressed the opinion in the *Bemærkninger* that the *Saga of Tristram* was "obviously only a later Icelandic adaptation of the original Norwegian translation of the French novel" (p. 157).⁸ Again changing his mind, Brynjúlfsson later proposed the thesis that the *Saga of Tristram* was based on a story, no longer extant, which an Icelander had heard abroad, probably in the British Isles.⁹

Kölbing regarded the shorter saga as an adaptation of *Tristrams saga*, and Golther categorically (and wrongly) declared that the latter was the only source of the Icelandic tale.¹⁰ According to Leach, this "boorish account of Tristram's noble passion" is based upon an "imperfect memory" of Brother Róbert's *Tristram*. Vilhjálmsson leaves the question open as to whether the striking discrepancies between the two sagas are due to incorrect recollections or deliberate intent on the part of the Icelandic author.¹¹ In a paper on *Tristrams saga* written several years ago, I was strongly inclined to agree with Leach.¹² Further study of the genre as a whole and of the names and manuscripts of the *Saga of Tristram* have compelled me to modify this position somewhat. In the following analysis of the Icelandic tale, which for reasons of space cannot be exhaustive, I shall set forth my present views on the sources and manner of composition of the *Saga of Tristram*.

Although the Icelandic tale is less than one-fourth as long as Brother Róbert's translation, the author goes back not one but two generations before the birth of the hero. Like many other *lygisögur*, this one also imitates the initial formula of the Family Sagas:

⁸ Kölbing apparently did not read this far, since he comments only on the first view advanced by Brynjúlfsson.

⁹ *Saga of Tristram ok Isönd samt Möttuls Saga* (Copenhagen, 1878), p. 390.

¹⁰ *Loc. cit.*, p. 186: "So liegt auch der isländischen Tristramsaga ausschliesslich die norwegische in der Hauptsache und in Einzelheiten deutlich zugrunde."

¹¹ *Riddarasögur*, VI, x.

¹² "Some Observations on *Tristrams saga*," presented at a meeting of the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study on May 4, 1958, at the University of California in Berkeley, and published in *Saga-Book*, XV (1957-1959), 102-29.

At the time when this story begins, a king ruled over England whose name was Philippus. He was both wise and benevolent. His queen, who was named Philippia, was a woman of refinement. They had two children, a son called Mórodd and a daughter named Blenzibly.

The king is attended by a knight, Plegrus, and by a counselor, Héri hinn hyggni. Blenzibly has a page named Pollornis.

The most interesting feature of the first chapter, which appears to be the invention of the author, is his selection of names. Blenzibly and Mórodd are obviously only slightly modified forms of Blenzinbil and Mórhold (also written Mórold in the MSS), as Blancheflor and Le Morholt are called in *Tristrams saga*. At first glance the startling substitution of Mórodd for Markis would seem to substantiate the contention of Leach that the Icelandic writer had a very imperfect recollection of the longer *Tristrams saga*. As we shall see presently, however, it is not at all unlikely that this switch of names was deliberate. Possibly the writer hit upon the idea of this change through his reading of *Partalópa saga*, in which a King Markhöldr of Bretland invades and subjugates France. This apparent fusion of Markis and Mórhold may well have motivated the substitution, although the phonetic similarity of Mórodd to Ísodd no doubt also had a bearing on it. Perhaps the author wished to indicate by this radical change in the name of one of the chief characters that he did not intend simply to retell the well-known story of Tristram, Ísönd, and King Markis.

Philippus was such a popular name for kings in the *lygisögur* that we are not surprised to find it here, although the equally popular Ríkarðr, to be sure, would have been more appropriate. The use of the corresponding feminine Philippia may have been suggested by *Rémundar saga keisarasonar*, in which a King Percius of Indíaland hið minna has a daughter named Percia, or by *Bærings saga*, which has an emperor Lucíníus whose daughter's name is Lucínía.¹³ Pollornis, of course, is a distortion of Apollonius (cf. also the form Pollo-nius in *Ala flekks saga*).

The most striking name, however, is Héri, which is cognate with English "hare." This name, which was probably originally an appella-tive, is found also in the *Færeyinga þáttur* and in *Hálfs saga ok Hálfs-rekka*.¹⁴ Whether the author of the *Saga af Tristram* borrowed the name from either of these sources or whether it was suggested by the name Neri in *Sigurðar saga þögla* is immaterial. What is important is the fact that he obviously knew the name Héri as a *heiti* for dwarf and used it appropriately with this meaning in mind.¹⁵ When we consider that *Héri* also means "dunce, blockhead," we realize that the author is using an alliterating contradictory cognomen for ironic

¹³ It may not be without significance, however, that Philippa, daughter of Henry IV of England, became Queen of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden through her marriage to King Erik at Lund in 1406.

¹⁴ Edited by A. LeRoy Andrews, *ANSB*, XIV (Halle a.S., 1909), 82.

¹⁵ *Héri* occurs twice in this sense in the *Snorra Edda* (Copenhagen, 1852), II, 470 and 553, and is also explained as a *dvergnavn* "dwarf name" in the *Lexicon Poeticum*.

effect. Héri hinn hyggni must have signified to the writer and his audience "the Dwarf Dunce the Clever."

After the death of King Philippus, Mórodd calls together an assembly (*þing*) at which he is unanimously chosen to succeed his father. Blenzibly, however, feeling that she is equally qualified and entitled to be her father's successor, raises an army with the help of Plegrus and occupies Skarðaborg, from where she wages war against her brother.¹⁶ While impossible in the Family Sagas, a situation like this is not unusual in the "lying stories." Among the "maiden kings" (*meykonungar*) who may well have influenced the writer are Þorbjörg in *Ála flekks saga*, Marmoría in *Þartalópa saga*, and especially Sedentia in *Sigurðar saga þögla*.¹⁷ The heroine of *Mírmanns saga*, frú Cecilia, is also quite martial, overcoming her own husband in single combat. The insurrection ends when Mórodd defeats Plegrus between the two opposing armies. A reconciliation follows, and all repair to the court of the king, where in the manner of the chivalric romances a tournament is announced to celebrate the happy settlement of the dispute.

In the following section, which corresponds roughly to the episode of Riwalin and Blanscheflur in Gottfried's *Tristan* (Kanelangres and Blenzinbil in *Tristrams saga*), we find the first of several interesting combinations of motifs derived from sources other than Brother Róbert's translation. Among the noteworthy personages who attend the tournament are King Hlöðvir of Spain, his faithful but elderly knight Patrökles (this name borrowed from *Trójumanna saga*), the latter's son Kalegras (obviously a contraction of Kanelangres), and Kalegras' foster father Biring. This variant of Bæringr is a fitting name for the counterpart of Roald le Foitenant, for the hero of *Bærings saga* was a paragon of fidelity. In a series of three jousts Kalegras, after twice unseating the local champion, Plegrus, finally kills him. Blenzibly, watching from the "highest towers of the city," becomes so enamored of the handsome and courteous knight that she summons him to her bower despite the vehement protests of her page Pollornis. Here Kalegras and Blenzibly remain for three years.

The situation recalls *Ivents saga* (a somewhat condensed adaptation of Chrétien's *Yvain*). From Lúneta's room Ivent catches sight of the unnamed mistress of the castle (Laudine in the French poem) following the corpse of her husband as it is borne across the courtyard. He falls in love with her, and with the help of Lúneta, the willing go-between, secures her hand in marriage. The idea of reversing the roles probably came from *Bærings saga*, the author of which borrowed the motif from *Ivents saga* with the following modifications. After slaying Count Samuel in single combat before the walls of

¹⁶ According to *Kormáks saga* (Chap. 27), Skarðaborg (Scarborough in Yorkshire) was founded ca. 966 by Kormákr and his brother Þorgils skarði and named for the latter.

¹⁷ On this point, see Erik Wahlgren, *The Maiden King in Iceland* (Chicago, 1938).

Bologna, Bæringr attends his opponent's funeral. Here the widow, unnamed as in *Ivents saga*, becomes enamored of the slayer of her husband as soon as she gets a clear view of his handsome face. Through a messenger she offers him her favor and her possessions, but noble Bæringr does not even deign to reply. The general situation in the *Saga af Tristram* is like that in *Bærings saga*, while the outcome is similar to that in *Ivents saga*, possibly augmented by an adaptation of the "sich verligen" motif from *Erex saga*.

Just as Partalópi is impelled to leave his beloved, albeit yet unseen, Marmoría in order to free his besieged father from King Mark-hölðr, Kalegras is finally roused from his amorous enchantment by the news that his father and King Hlöðvir have been killed in battle against an invading army led by King Elemmie of Hólmgard (Russia). Elemmie looks very much like Eylimi, a name borne by the father of Sváva and by the father of Hjörðis (and thus the grandfather of Sigurðr) in the Poetic Edda.¹⁸ Possibly it was for this reason that the writer of the paper manuscript altered the name to Clemimi.

Returning to Spain, Kalegras avenges the death of his father and his sovereign, destroys the invading Russian army, but himself suffers mortal wounds. Up to this point there is a certain similarity to the return of Kanelangres to Bretland to fight the marauding Welsh army. Here, however, a variant of the voyage-of-healing motif is introduced, so that the end of this episode more nearly resembles the final scene of *Tristrams saga*. Summoned to the side of her husband, Blenziblý examines his wounds, but sees at once that there is "no need to bind them up." A few days after the death of Kalegras, Blenziblý dies of a broken heart and is buried beside her husband in a stone coffin. Almost parenthetically the author mentions that Blenziblý, before leaving England, gave birth to a child, "and this boy child was baptized and named Tristram." The etymology of this name, which seemed so important to Brother Róbert, was omitted by the author of the Icelandic tale. The orphan, Tristram, is reared by his faithful foster father, Biring.

The abduction of the young hero in the *Saga af Tristram* is completely different from that in the Norwegian version. A King Túrnés of Blakamannavellir (Africa) invades Spain, defeats Biring's army, and captures Tristram and his companions as they are playing in a clearing in a forest. Túrnés returns all the other boys to their parents for high ransom—this is evidently an echo of the tribute motif—but refuses to release Tristram for fear that he might organize a rebellion against him. When Tristram proves to be too obstreperous for him to manage, Túrnés sells him as a slave to a band of pirates. Unable

¹⁸ In the *Helga kviða Hjörvarðssonar* and *Frá dauða Sinfjötla*, as well as in Snorri's *Skáldskaparmál*, Chaps. 40 and 64. The variant spelling *Ehimi*, which is almost identical with the form used in our text, also occurs. See E. H. Lind, *Norsk-isländska Dopnamn* (Uppsala, 1915), col. 249.

to get any work out of him, even after repeated beatings and much abuse, including shaving his head and smearing it with tar, the pirates "one beautiful day" maroon him on a rocky reef off the coast of England. Tristram swims ashore, proceeds to the court of King Mórodd, and introduces himself to his uncle. Here he is soon joined by Biring, who, like Róaldr in the longer saga, appears as a beggar after having searched far and wide for his foster son. Tristram soon becomes a handsome and accomplished knight, superior to all others at the court of Mórodd. "And even though he was superior to them in all accomplishments, they did not envy him for this; but all of them were happy to receive his gifts, for he gave them gold and jewels."

In view of the importance of the envy of Tristram's rivals at the court of King Markis in *Tristrams saga*, one cannot help wondering whether the writer of the Icelandic saga is not deliberately changing the situation. This may also be true of the passage mentioned above, which tells of Tristram's release by the pirates, for in Brother Róbert's translation, as in Gottfried's version of the story, Tristram's abductors get rid of him in the hope of thus surviving a terrible storm at sea. And is the author of our tale perhaps writing tongue-in-cheek when he assures us that no one at court envied Tristram's superior achievements and his preferential treatment by the king, because he gave them costly gifts? However this may be, the author does inject a crude, but welcome, bit of humor right in the middle of his page-long eulogy of the hero: "And it is said that Tristram had sold his bald pate, and that he had made a good bargain; for now he had a fine head of hair which was as fair as gold and just as long as was seemly."

The role of Mórhold is played in the Icelandic *Tristram* by a King Engres of Ireland, who has a mother named Flúrent, a sister named Ísodd hin fagra, and a counselor called Kæi hinn kurteisi. The relationship of Engres to the two women is thus not quite the same as that of Mórhold to Queen Ísodd and her daughter Ísönd in the Norwegian saga. Flúrent in the Norwegian saga corresponds to Queen Ísodd, who was the sister, not the mother, of Mórhold. The counterpart of Ísodd hin fagra is called Ísönd in the longer saga, in which both Queen Ísodd's husband and the latter's chamberlain remain anonymous. The name of the king in the Icelandic story may be the final element of Kanelangres. Flúrent, also spelled Flórent occasionally in the vellum, looks like a modification of Florentía, a name borne by the wife of Lais in *Mágus saga jarls*, by the daughter of King Ludovikus in *Sigurðar saga þögla*, and by the daughter of King Agrippa of Indía in *Gibbons saga*. The semantic and phonetic similarity of this name with the basic element of Blankiflúr is striking. Did the writer of this saga perhaps know some version of the Tristan story, no longer extant, in which the hero's mother or some other woman character was called Blankiflúr? Or was the name suggested

to him by *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr*, with its etymology, so characteristic of the Icelandic adaptations of French romances, of the names of the hero and heroine? It should be added here that another character in this saga bears the name Lilja, which is synonymous with *Blancheflor*.

The extravagant description of Ísodd's radiant beauty is conventional:

She was more beautiful than any other woman. She was so fair that people saw no blemish on her; and, if one might dare say so, it seemed to people that rays of light shone from her eyes and her face. Her hair was so long that she could cover herself with it when she loosened it from her golden hairbands, and her hair was as much fairer than gold than gold is fairer than iron. She was wise and well-liked, liberal and munificent, and more accomplished in leechcraft than any other woman known at that time.

It is interesting to note that skill in leechcraft in the Icelandic tale is a trait shared not by Ísodd's mother, as in the longer saga, but, as we saw above, by Tristram's mother Blenzibly. The description of Ísodd's hair recalls Helga the Fair in *Gunnlaugs saga*, whose hair was also so long "that it could cover her completely, and it was as fair as beaten gold." Of the women in the *lygisögur* the one whose description comes closest to that of Ísodd is Sedentiana in *Sigurðar saga þögla* (Chap. 2), whose "eyes shone like stars" and from whom "rays of light seemed to shine." Her head was as radiant as "flaming fires or rays of the sun, and with her fair hair she could cover her entire body."

The author's most noteworthy innovation in this part of the story is the introduction of Kæi with the incongruous appellative "the courteous." The unsavory character of Kæi must have been well known in the North from the translations of Arthurian romances. In the highly condensed and simplified Icelandic adaptation of Chrétien's *Perceval*, we are repeatedly reminded of Kæi's disgraceful behavior in striking the "beautiful and courteous maiden" and kicking the king's jester into the fire. Kæi's unflattering role in *Möttuls saga* and his ignominious defeats by Parceval and Ívent were surely not forgotten by anyone who had read or heard these stories. The prevailing image of Kæi is probably reflected by the queen's scathing denunciation of him in *Ivents saga*, ending with the prophetic words: "All people who hear of you will hate you because of your [malicious] tongue; and your name will always be mentioned as a symbol of evil as long as the world exists" (Chap. 3). There can be little doubt that here, as in the case of Héri hinn hyggni, the writer of the Icelandic *Tristram* is deliberately combining a name which uniquely fits the character with a contradictory epithet for ironic effect.

Unlike Mórhold, King Engres does not come to England with a small band of followers to collect tribute, but at the head of an army to burn and plunder the land. We are not surprised to learn that he is accompanied by Flúrent and Ísodd. The holmgang motif, which

would have been so appropriate at this point of the saga, was deleted by the author. Tristram and Engres meet on the battlefield, and in the end it is not Engres but Tristram who has a piece of his opponent's sword lodged in his head. This situation recalls the predicament of Þór after his battle with the giant Hrungnir in the Prose Edda (*Skáldskaparmál*, Chap. 17). The closest parallel, and probably the source of this change, is found in *Rémundar saga* (Chap. 9). In parrying a blow from Eskupart, junkeri Rémundr strikes off the end of his enemy's sword, which becomes imbedded in his own skull.

The most grotesque addition made by the writer of the Icelandic saga occurs in connection with Tristram's voyage in quest of a doctor who can remove the sword splinter from his head. At the wounded hero's request, King Mórodd makes ready a ship with a crew of sixty men (not twenty, as Kölbing mistakenly states), carefully selected so that all are related by blood or by marriage. As the ship approaches the coast of Ireland, Tristram provokes a fight among his shipmates which ends in the death of all of them. Despite the careful motivation of this slaughter, it seems to be absolutely pointless, having no bearing whatsoever on subsequent events. In fact, when Tristram is rebuked by Ísodd for having done this wrong to his uncle, he casually replies that only such men had been selected to accompany him whose loss would be least serious to the king.

There are several interesting points of similarity in this episode with the *Tristrant* of Eilhart von Oberg. In this version of the Tristram story, the hero puts out to sea alone in a little boat and is eventually washed ashore near the king's castle in Ireland. The king's servants find Tristrant and tell the king, who requests his daughter to heal the wounded man. In the Icelandic saga Tristram's ship drifts ashore, where he is discovered by the queen's servant Kollr, who immediately informs the queen. After conversing briefly with Tristram, the queen asks her daughter to remove the sword splinter and heal his wound. It would probably be going too far to suggest that the Icelandic writer knew the Berol-Eilhart version of the story and invented the complicated expedient of getting rid of Tristram's companions in order to have the hero land in Ireland alone. Partly because Tristram arrives with a piece of Engres' sword sticking in his head, the order of events is changed somewhat. Thus Ísodd recognizes Tristram as her brother's slayer almost immediately.

The dragon-slaying episode is also included in Tristram's first voyage rather than in the second one. After dispatching the beast, Tristram cuts out a piece of its tongue. Shortly afterward, Kæi also cuts off a slice of the dragon's tongue, but he never has a chance to present it in support of his claim to have slain the dragon. Almost before he can open his mouth, Queen Flúrent calls him a liar and orders him to be hanged at dawn from the highest tree. But Tristram, who callously caused the death of his sixty companions, reminds the queen of Kæi's long years of service to her and prevails upon her

merely to banish him instead. The queen offers Ísodd to Tristram as a reward for his heroic deed, but the hero gallantly declares that only his uncle, King Mórodd, is worthy of her daughter.

Returning to England, Tristram relates his adventures to his uncle, announces his intention to bring Ísodd back as Mórodd's bride, and immediately sets off again for Ireland. Despite Ísodd's broad hints that Tristram should speak for himself and the queen's insistence that her daughter does not need a man any better than Tristram for a husband, the betrothal of Ísodd to Mórodd is brought about. Ísodd's companion in the Icelandic saga bears the name Bringven, which, oddly enough, is closer to the French than the form Bringvet which occurs in the Norwegian saga. As the foster mother of Ísodd and the daughter of Jarl Kúsen, Bringven also enjoys a higher social status than Bringvet, although this seems to have no significance.

After drinking the love potion, Tristram and Ísodd delay for three months before proceeding to England—this is marked and possibly deliberate contrast to the Norwegian saga in which the two lovers hasten to Tintajól as fast as they can. Mórodd suggests that a marriage between Tristram and Ísodd would be more appropriate because of their ages, and that Tristram should assume the throne, but Tristram nobly declines the magnanimous offer of the king. A very close analogue is found in *Haralds saga*, in which King Dagr, father of Signý, suggests that his daughter would be a more fitting match for Harald than for Harald's father.¹⁹

This episode is one of the weakest in the entire saga. Not only is the ambassadorial voyage for the bride completely unmotivated; but the drinking of the love potion, which explains and symbolizes the inevitability of the love of Tristram and Ísodd and thus extenuates their guilt, is dealt with in a very summary manner. And what is worse, the love potion is never mentioned again, even though the author in various ways tries to convince his audience that the two lovers were destined for each other by Almighty God.

An interesting variant of the bridal substitution motif which Kōlbing failed to notice is the fact that Bringven takes Ísodd's place not for one night, as in the other versions of the Tristan story, but for three nights. A rather remote parallel is found in *Haralds saga*, in which the substitute bride maintains her unrightful place for a considerable length of time until King Hringr, at the instigation of Odin in disguise, gets the false bride to reveal her true identity by thrice asking her name as she lies asleep.

Many conjectures could be made regarding the possible sources of inspiration for this amazing and amusing distortion of an old literary motif. The writer was surely acquainted with the folklore belief, reflected in the last verse of *Skírnismál* and in *Ragnars saga loð-*

¹⁹ See H. G. Leach and Gertrude Schoepperle, "Haraldssaga Hringsbana and the Tristan and Svanhild Romances," *Publications of the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study*, II (1914-15), 264-72.

brókar (Chap. 6), that a couple should observe three nights of continence before consummating their marriage. Possibly he was thinking of the situation in *Þiðreks saga*, where Brynhild refused for three days to recognize Gunnar as her husband. An even closer parallel is found in the Norwegian saga (Chap. 87). Tristram and his brother-in-law, Kardin, spend several nights with Ísönd and Bringvet, whereby Kardin, twice deceived by Bringvet through the use of a magic pillow, does not accomplish his purpose until the third night.

Whatever the source of this change may be, the author obviously is again resorting to a burlesque form of humor, in this case designed to emphasize the naïve obtuseness of Mórodd; for he tells us that "although the king was wise, he was unable to see through this deception." As in Eilhart's *Tristrant*, the two lovers share one bed during the time Bringven is with the king, whereas Ísönd in *Tristrams saga* anxiously hovers about outside her husband's room, fearing that her secret might somehow be exposed.

The motif of the clean and soiled shirts is treated much the same as in the Norwegian saga, although the attendant circumstances are quite different. In the Icelandic tale, Ísödd orders two of her men-servants to take her foster mother into the forest and to burn her to death. After hearing Bringven's story of the clean shirt which she lent to Ísödd because the queen's shirt was soiled from much use, the two thralls, who obviously failed to understand the thinly veiled metaphor, declare that the punishment seems severe for the slight offense, but add reluctantly that they must nevertheless carry out their orders. Just as they are on the point of setting fire to the pile of wood, Ísödd steps forth from her hiding place in the forest to save Bringven from a horrible death. The author assures us that Ísödd "never intended to have her harmed any more than herself." She merely wanted to test Bringven to make sure that she was really as loyal to her as she believed. The writer's purpose in altering the incident in this manner was apparently to ennoble the character of the heroine.

Héri's attempts to ensnare the lovers and to convince the obstinately purblind king of their guilt contain a number of twists, both original and amusing. In *Tristrams saga* the hero, warned by Bringvet that the malicious dwarf has strewn flour on the floor, is able to avoid the trap by leaping from his bed to that of Ísönd. In the Icelandic saga Tristram's footprints in the flour are clear proof of the correctness of Héri's accusations; but King Mórodd refuses to believe that his nephew's motives were dishonorable, insisting that Tristram merely wanted to keep Ísödd from becoming bored or lonely while he was in church.

In the Norwegian saga Tristram's wounds break open from the exertion of his leap, and Ísönd tries unsuccessfully to account for the blood by saying that her arm was bleeding. In the Icelandic tale Ísödd immediately cuts her hand with a pair of scissors (not with a needle, as Kölbing stated!) and mixes her blood with Tristram's.

Although Ísodd's ingenious expedient is probably the invention of the Icelandic writer, the self-infliction of a wound on her part is reminiscent of the episode of the *bloch mit wulfesisen* in Eilhart's epic, in which all the knights of King Artus except Kei deliberately cut themselves to prevent the detection of Tristrant. Unfortunately, Ísodd's ruse does not work either, for Héri recognizes that male and female blood were blended together. This remarkable ability of Héri recalls the method used by Snorri goði in *Eyrbyggja saga* (Chap. 45) to determine that a clot of blood in the snow came from a body cavity and not from a superficial flesh wound.

Besides separating the flour-on-floor, blood-in-bed episode into two separate incidents, the Icelandic writer also rearranges the sequence of events. Thus the attempt of the king and the wicked dwarf to spy on the lovers from the branches of a tree is related as the first rather than as one of the last of the stratagems of the king's counselor. The floating twig has been deleted. Tristram accompanies Ísodd to a well by a grove of trees where she is wont to wash her linen. Whether this rustic touch was intended to be humorous is not immediately apparent.

The forest idyll of *Tristrams saga* has been changed in the *Saga af Tristram* to a seven-day imprisonment without food in a cave. Returning home from church one evening, Mórodd finds Tristram in Ísodd's bed; and "now it seems to the king that he can no longer doubt that matters are probably not just as they should be." In the cave Ísodd suggests that there is nothing left for them to do except to enjoy each other's love; but Tristram, suddenly grown virtuous, insists that they sleep on opposite sides of the cave. This, of course, is an echo of the motif of the bare sword between the sleepers in *Tristrams saga*. At the same time it is a slightly modified repetition of the scene by the well, for King Mórodd remains outside the cave to listen to the conversation of the lovers. Convinced once more of their innocence, he has them released and takes them back to his castle, where he treats them well.

Among the abrupt transitions which are characteristic of this saga, one of the most startling occurs just before the episode of the ambiguous oath. Tristram leads Mórodd's army against an invader, Fúlsus, who is "as heathen as a dog." On the verge of defeat, Tristram vows to give up his dalliance with Ísodd if God will grant him the victory. Immediately after thanking Tristram for his valiant triumph in face of overwhelming odds, Mórodd demands that Ísodd prove her innocence by undergoing a trial. This comes as a complete surprise to the reader, for no mention of suspicion is made after the cave episode. Mórodd also denies Ísodd's request to be permitted to speak to Tristram before undergoing the trial, "for you two shall not devise some deceit."

And yet it happened that they met on a certain street before they were to go to the trial. Hildifonsus was the name of the bishop in Valland who was to conduct

the trial. And one day, as they were riding along, they came to a large bog, and Queen Isodd's horse sank down in it. Then a certain beggar came along and pulled her up on the bank, and this happened in such a way that she stepped over him. And when she came to Valland, they found the bishop, and she asked to be judged innocent, declaring that no man had ever come close to her except her husband and the beggar who had helped her across the bog. And on the basis of this assertion the bishop subjected her to the test, and she was found to be perfectly innocent. Thereupon King Mórodd went home.

The entire situation and a number of details are so similar to the Spes episode in *Grettis saga* that it is difficult to believe that the writer of this tale was not influenced by it. Golther's translation of this passage reveals a faulty understanding of the Icelandic text. Among other things he confused *bakki* m. "brink, bank" with *bak* n. "back," and mistranslated *steig yfir hann* "stepped over him" as "rittingslauf ihm sass."

Aside from bestowing on Tristram's wife the fitting designation Isodd svarta (Isodd the Dark), which was retained by the author of *Tristrams kvæði* and by most of the Tristram folk tales, the writer of the Icelandic saga has added nothing to improve Brother Róbert's summary account of Tristram's marriage. As usual, he has changed the names and incidental circumstances. Tristram slays a King Beniðsus, who has seized the throne of Spain, and defeats the latter's allies, the jarls Sigurðr and Hringr, who thereupon offer Tristram their sister Isodd the Dark in marriage. The hero's anguish on his wedding night, reduced by Brother Róbert to a brief, dry statement, has disappeared completely in the Icelandic saga; and the theme of the audacious water, which Brother Róbert related with relish and in detail, has been distorted almost beyond recognition. The entire account, comprising several pages in the Norwegian saga, and corresponding to hundreds of lines in Gottfried, has been ruthlessly compressed into one paragraph:

It is said that Tristram did not soon give up thinking about Isodd the Fair, and it seemed to Isodd the Dark that she did not possess his love. It happened one time that they were to attend a banquet at the home of a prominent man. And when they returned from the banquet, it was raining heavily, and Isodd the Dark remarked that the rain was less uninquisitive than her husband. But when they had been living together for three years, Isodd the Dark gave birth to a baby boy. The child was sprinkled with water and named Kalegras. He soon grew to be tall and handsome like his father.

In the Norwegian saga, as in Gottfried and Eilhart, the marriage remains childless.

The account of the hero's death, on the other hand, although highly condensed, is not essentially different from that of Brother Róbert. After winning an important battle against a King Amilius for Keisari Donisus of Saxland (Germany), Tristram accompanies his namesake to Jakobsland (Galicia), where he is mortally wounded. Tristram first has his wife and her brothers brought to him. Then he sends the two jarls to England for Isodd the Fair. In contrast to the Norwegian saga, the voyage of Isodd is not delayed by calms and storms.

The black and white sails have also been replaced by black and white tents or awnings. Isodd the Fair lives for three days after the death of Tristram and then dies of a broken heart. As in the longer version of the story, the lovers are buried on opposite sides of a church, "the largest in the country."

Then a tree with the most beautiful fruit sprang up from each of their graves, and the trees grew until they touched above the roof of the church. Their limbs entwined, and the trees grew so high that men have scarcely ever seen higher ones. These trees are still standing there as a sign that Tristram did not beguile Isodd the Fair because of malice toward his kinsman, King Mórodd, but rather because God Himself in His wisdom had destined them for each other. Tristram's reason for not accepting Isodd the Fair from King Mórodd was that he wished him to have the best woman in marriage, and yet he was by no means able to withstand his fate.

"Now although they could not enjoy each other while alive," said he who composed this story, "let us pray Almighty God that they may now enjoy each other's love and friendship. And this," he said, "is to be expected, since one has to do here with a merciful God."

But the story does not end with the death of Tristram and Isodd the Fair. Just as he extended the beginning of the saga to include the grandparents of the hero, the Icelandic author continues it down to the time of Tristram's grandchildren. As soon as Mórodd hears of the tragic end of his wife and nephew, he convenes an assembly to have Kalegras Tristramsson elected king of England. Kalegras marries Lilja (not Silja, as Kölbing has it!), the daughter of the emperor of Saxland, who in due time bears him two sons and a daughter. The daughter is called Mollina, and the sons are fittingly named Patrókles and Mórodd. The author declares that there is a "great saga" about Tristram's grandsons, but the writer of the paper manuscript, who presumably searched in vain for this saga, denies that there are any stories about them. In the vellum the saga concludes with the pious statement: "Now Kalegras rules over England as long as God permits, He the same who lives and reigns in the world of worlds. Amen." The nineteenth-century transcript omits this sentence and states simply that "Kalegras ruled England as long as he lived, and thus ends the saga."

After abdicating his throne in favor of Kalegras, King Mórodd goes to the Holy Land to live out his allotted days. "And there he enters a hermit's cell, where he joyfully awaits the time when it will please Almighty God to call him unto Himself from the bondage of this world." In this, King Mórodd is not original. Indeed, there are so many parallels to this loan motif in Icelandic literature that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to determine the exact source. Guðrun, the heroine of *Laxdæla saga*, set the precedent by becoming the "first nun and hermitess in Iceland" (Chap. 78). In *Grettis saga* Thorstein and Spes voluntarily give up married life in order thereby "to enjoy more certainly their eternal life together in another world." In *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr* the hero and heroine undertake this step

somewhat belatedly: "And when they were seventy years old, they divided their realm among those of their sons who were fully grown. Then Flóres entered a monastery and Blankiflúr, a convent, and there they lived out their lives in God's service."

Parallels are especially numerous in the *lygisögur*. In *Mágus saga jarls* (Chap. 75), King Vilhjálmr "becomes a hermit and dedicates himself to God" after giving his kingdom Valland to his son Geirarðr. At the end of *Jarlmanns saga ok Hermanns*, King Hermann and Queen Rikilát in their old age "divided their realm among their sons and fared to Jerusalem and lived out their lives there. . . ." Probably the closest parallel is that found at the conclusion of *Mírmanns saga*. At the height of their might and honor, King Mírmann and Queen Cecilía renounced all "worldly wealth and power, and entered a cloister and there served God as long as they lived, and then experienced a joyful departure from this world." It is quite likely that the author of the *Saga of Tristram* was acquainted with most of these stories.

Occasionally a combination of themes or the combination of a theme and a name makes it possible to determine the source of a given motif, especially if the motif is a blind one. We are somewhat surprised to read that King Mórodd specifically ordered that "no one should come uninvited" to his wedding feast (Chap. 11). A close parallel is found in *Elís saga ok Rósamundu* (Chap. 68): "'I now intend,' said Elís, 'to celebrate my wedding. No one who is already here shall leave during this time, nor shall anyone come here uninvited, neither young nor old, poor nor wealthy.'" The author of *Rémundar saga* copied this sentence almost verbatim (Chap. 68): "'No one shall come uninvited, young nor old, poor nor wealthy, natives nor foreigners.'"

Since the author of the *Saga of Tristram* borrowed a variant of the sword-splinter motif from *Rémundar saga*, it is not unlikely that the above passage inspired his pointless statement that Mórodd "ordered that no one should come uninvited." Equally cogent evidence can be adduced, however, to show that *Elís saga* supplied this blind motif. In the Icelandic *Tristram* (Chap. 12), Mohammed is first given his usual name Maúmet, by which he is known in many *lygisögur*, but is thereafter referred to as Makon. This form was evidently borrowed with slight modification from *Elís saga*, in which Mohammed is usually called Magún and is only three or four times referred to as Maúmet. Thus the motif in question, although of little consequence in itself, helps to establish *Elís saga* and *Rémundar saga* as important sources of the Icelandic *Tristrams saga*.²⁰

In contrast to the redundant elegance of style in *Tristrams saga*, the language of the *Saga of Tristram* is simple and natural. The dative absolute and the excessive use of the present participle, for which Brother Róbert had a marked propensity, are lacking in the Icelandic

²⁰ On the relationship of *Elís saga* to *Rémundar saga*, see the edition of the latter by S. G. Broberg (Copenhagen, 1912), pp. liv-lix.

talé; and the use of rhyme and alliteration, carried to ludicrous extremes in the Norwegian saga, is restricted to a few conventional expressions such as *langr ok strangr* "long and severe," *brjóst ok brynja* "breast and byrnie," *brenna ok bala* "burn and destroy by fire," etc. The piling up of trite or farfetched similes likewise is avoided; only one instance of it occurs in the *Saga of Tristram*.

On the other hand, several traits of style which are characteristic of the *Islendinga sögur* are consciously or unconsciously imitated. In the above description of the trees growing from the graves of the lovers, for example, no less than three words for tree—*lundr*, *tré*, and *viðr*—are used for the sake of avoiding monotony.²¹ When Kalegras learns of the death of his father and his king (Chap. 4), *Þá mátti ekki finna á honum, hvort honum þótti vel eða illa* "one could not tell whether this pleased or grieved him." Snorri goði and other saga people are described in similar terms. Even the trait of having a character utter a curt, disdainful remark in the face of almost certain death is copied. After Tristram helps his namesake defeat his enemies, the latter offers him all his lands as a reward. To this Tristram, mortally wounded, replies: "It isn't certain at the moment who will rule these lands."

An interesting characteristic of this saga is the frequent allusion of the writer to "the one who composed this story," much as medieval continental poets referred to their actual and alleged sources. (This is one of the reasons Brynjúlfsson believed that the *Saga of Tristram* was an adaptation of a foreign original.) The most amusing instance of this is found at the end of Chap. 12, when Tristram nobly refuses to accept Ísodd and the kingdom Mórodd from his uncle Mórodd: "'But I swear,' said the one who composed the saga, 'that I would rather have Ísodd than all the gold in the world.'" But while the style of this tale at times approximates the simplicity of the Sagas of Icelanders, it does not even remotely approach their subtle sophistication and pregnant understatement, which make them so enjoyable to the modern reader.

From this epitomizing analysis of the *Saga of Tristram ok Ísodd*, we may draw the following tentative conclusions concerning its relationship to *Tristrams saga ok Ísöndar*. Despite the many deletions, the ruthless condensation, and the sometimes startling changes in scene of action, personal names, and the order of events, the Icelandic saga has preserved the essential motifs and the general outline of the Norwegian version of the Tristan epic of Thomas of Brittany. But the noble sentiment, the intense passion, and the deep tragedy of the Anglo-Norman chivalric romance, which were not enhanced in the process of translation into Norwegian prose,²² have almost completely

²¹ Brynjúlfsson (p. 79) translates *lundr* in this passage as *Lund* "grove of trees." The general situation, however, does not permit this interpretation. See J. Fritzner, *Ordbog over det gamle norske Sprog*, 2nd ed. (Christiana, 1896), II, 571.

²² Cf. the strictures of *Tristrams saga* by J. Bédier, *Le Roman de Tristan par Thomas* (Paris, 1905), II, 75, and by E. Ó. Sveinsson, *The Age of the Sturlungs*, trans. J. S. Hannesson (Ithaca, 1953), p. 41.

disappeared in the Icelandic story. This fact, plus the insufficient motivation and sketchy treatment of important events, and, conversely, the detailed treatment of insignificant situations, would seem to corroborate the general view that the *Saga of Tristram* is a clumsy and boorish summary of *Tristrams saga*, based, as Leach believed, on an imperfect memory of the Norwegian version.

But, on the other hand, there are a number of striking features of style and composition which militate against this view and suggest another interpretation of the Icelandic saga. The additions at the beginning and the end of the story and the motifs adopted and adapted from diverse sources indicate that the author was not merely trying to retell the Norwegian story, as, for example, the writer of the German prose *Tristrant und Isalde* retold the epic of Eilhart. This impression is strengthened by the following considerations. The "epic triad" is consciously used to excess, the most ludicrous instances being the three-year love enchantment of Kalegras and Blenzibly, the delay of three months after the fateful drinking of the love potion, and the threefold bridal substitution. The happy designation of the sweetheart and wife of Tristram as Isodd the Fair and Isodd the Dark (for which the Norwegian saga has Isönd and Isodd), the appropriate name Biring for the faithful foster father of Tristram, and the burlesquely clever combination of a fitting name with an incongruous appellation in the case of Héri the Clever and Kay the Courteous cannot be accidental. The deviations of the Icelandic saga from the Norwegian source follow a consistent pattern: they represent a complete reversal of the situation. And finally, the author repeatedly tries to ennoble the character of the two lovers and to convince the reader of their good motives even though they are unable to withstand their "fate." Seen from this point of view, the *Saga of Tristram ok Isodd* appears not as an abbreviated, defective reconstruction of *Tristrams saga*, but, like *Haralds saga Hringsbana*, as a "deliberate reply" to the Norwegian version of the French romance.²³ The intriguing question of the possible relevance of this saga to contemporary social conditions, however, transcends the scope of the present paper.

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²³ See *Romance in Iceland*, p. 151. Cf. also Sigurður Nordal's interpretation of *Eyrbyggja saga* as a reaction to romantic influence in his *Sagalitteraturen* (Stockholm, 1953), p. 248.

L'ESSAY DES FILLES AND THE THÉÂTRE ITALIEN

By SPIRE PITOU

On May 14, 1697, M. d'Argenson, the new lieutenant general of police, received orders to close the Théâtre Italien. Mme de Maintenon had heard that she was going to be ridiculed in *La Fausse Prude* by the Italians. The actress, using her influence with Louis XIV, set in motion a series of events that was to result in the closing of their theater. The date of these events, coupled with the date of the publication of *L'Essay des filles* in Cologne (1699) and the accompanying title-page indication to the effect that this play was destined originally for performance at the Hôtel de Bourgogne, fosters the hypothesis that this composition was the last creative effort of the Italian players before their exile from Paris and its environs in the spring of 1697. This supposition prompts a concomitant presumption that the comedy was complete in manuscript in Paris at this time, but that publication (even anonymous) was not deemed prudent until it could be done safely in a foreign country, which was accomplished two years later. Thus, while *L'Essay des filles* is by no means a great play intrinsically, it would seem pertinent to report upon it, at least briefly, since it affords direct knowledge of the sort of comedy that the members of the Théâtre Italien were planning to stage in the face of the direct warnings that had already been issued by the authorities.¹

One notes, even in a casual reading of *L'Essay des filles*, that it possesses nearly all the qualities that a governmental censor, however dull his perception, would be quick to condemn. It is indeed difficult to see how, even if the episode of *La Fausse Prude* had not precipitated the official blow, *L'Essay des filles* could possibly have failed to effect a quick and complete condemnation of its own. For if the Italians had had the opportunity to play it out upon the boards with their accustomed zest and color, Pontchartrain's spy, La Reynie, would certainly have been lurking somewhere in the theater. If such had been the case, there is no way of knowing what he or some sycophantic courtier would have hastened to carry back to the authorities to the detriment of this too ebullient group of actors and actresses trying to promote laughter and success by all the means they knew and practiced.²

¹ Cf. Pierre Mèlèse, *Répertoire analytique des documents contemporains d'information et de critique concernant le théâtre à Paris sous Louis XIV, 1659-1715* (Paris, 1934), pp. 95-96; N.-M. Bernardin, *La Comédie italienne en France et les théâtres de la foire et du boulevard, 1590-1791* (Paris, 1902), p. 66; the frères Parfaict, *Histoire de l'ancien théâtre italien* (Paris, 1767), pp. 128-30. There is a copy of *L'Essay des filles* in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal: Rf. 22637 (17). Also, cf. Henry Carrington Lancaster, *History of French Dramatic Literature in the Seventeenth Century* (Baltimore, 1929-1942), IV, 695.

² For an exposition of the various elements in the Théâtre Italien, cf. Constant Mic, *La Commedia dell'Arte ou le théâtre des comédiens italiens des XVI^e, XVII^e, XVIII^e siècles* (Paris, 1927).

In three acts and twenty-two more or less connected scenes, *L'Essay des filles* is the logical conclusion of the Italians' tendency to ignore their own language: it is written entirely in French—even the songs are in this language. But it exhibits all the characteristics of the theater for which it was intended. The personages have the traditional, albeit sometimes misspelled, names of Arlequin, Columbine, Marinette, rather than names furnished by the author himself.³ The actors play more than one role, and there is complete insouciance with respect to the most ordinary conventions of classical comedy: Arlequin plays himself and the guardian of the sacred fire within the confines of the first act, in which unity of place is ignored and the rule of scene-linkage is violated. Proverbs are paraphrased to suit the situation: "Que n'enferme-t-il sa poule quand les Coqs sont lachés?" (I, 1). Tragedy is parodied, in this instance *Le Cid*, as it was in *Arlequin lingère du palais* (1682), *Les deux Arlequins* (1691), and *Le Tombeau du maître André* (1695): "Columbine, as-tu du cœur?" (III, 2). Disguise is employed (II, 3); mythology is made the butt of jest (II, 5); ancient history is ridiculed (I, 7). The usual thrusts are made at contemporary manners: the casual nature of army marriages (III, 1), the pedantry and ignorance of pompous physicians (II, 4), the loose ways and extravagant boasting of men in the military (I, 5), the tendency of certain groups to entertain base ideas at the foot of the statue of Henri IV—"les residentes du Cheval de Bronze" (I, 9).

But these departures from the regular manner of contemporary comedy and the accompanying jibes may in no wise be adjudged serious enough to have caused the suspension of the troupe. It is rather in the use of overtly erotic material that one glimpses the possibility of offense, especially when it is remembered that luridness in the Italian theater was compounded by gesturing, posturing, and improvisation.

For *L'Essay des filles* makes it quite clear that by 1697 the Italians had forgotten the 1688 injunction to eliminate "de leurs pièces tous les mots à double entendre qui sont trop libres."⁴ Not only are there ambiguous remarks in nearly every scene, but the central situation involves a much used theme of the troupe: the ingénue's efforts to catch a husband—no matter whom or how, as long as there is no delay.⁵ And, as Regnard says in *La Foire Saint-Germain* (1695), the pursuing female is a "demi-fille." The problem is, as Arlequin remarks in *L'Essay des filles* (I, 6), "n'estre pas antidatté cocu."

The central situation evolves from Spinette's desire to marry one of the four suitors pressing for her hand. The dialogue, as often as not, revolves about the eternal problem of how, to borrow a manner of speaking from La Fontaine, "l'esprit vient aux jeunes filles"—and

³ Cf. Pierre Mélése, pp. 95-96, and N.-M. Bernardin, p. 24.

⁴ Cf. Pierre Mélése, p. 23, notation after Dangeau, and p. 24, for Mervézin's comment on the actions of the Italians on the stage.

⁵ For an account of this theme in the Théâtre Italien, cf. N.-M. Bernardin, pp. 45 ff.

how many young women succeed, or care to succeed, in remaining chaste. In fact, the title of the play is based upon I, 7, where "le Théâtre représente une Sale [*sic*] au milieu de laquelle paroît un feu qui s'exhale & augmente." Arlequin tends the fire, waiting for a vestal who will make herself known by her ability to reduce the fury of the flames.

But Colombine, Olaria, Marinette, and Spinette, all fan the fire to greater fury when they presume to offer themselves as eligible candidates. Arlequin tells Colombine that "tout l'onguent à la brulure des Apoticaire de Paris & la Riviere de Seine ne seroit pas suffisante d'empêcher votre consommation" (I, 7). Olaria is informed that she is better suited to guarding "la Riviere du Pont Neuf ou la Samaritaine" because, if she approaches the fire, she will burn "comme une poignée de paille." Marinette and Spinette are warned in their turn to remove their clothing, if they do not wish to lose their garments too (I, 9, 10). Arlequin finally decides to give up hope in the face of all these pyrotechnics. And, in some places, the dialogue is even more flamboyant, as when Mezetin reminds Arlequin that he has "un bidet qui monteroit au grand galop l'escalier de la Tour de Babilonne" (III, 2).

This, then, is the sort of composition that the Italian players were readying for the public at the very moment when the ax was to fall. When one remembers the later dispositions and inclinations of Louis XIV and Mme de Maintenon, it is not surprising that official action was taken against these players. But whatever one may choose to conjecture about the possible reactions that might have ensued from a staging of *L'Essay des filles*, one must admit that this comedy is a signal aid to understanding the nature of the Italians' productions at the time when they were banished and Louis XIV was growing older.

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LAMARTINE AND THE GENESIS OF *QAIN*

By IRVING PUTTER

Ever since the publication half a century ago of the remarkable study by Henri Bernès on the literary origins of Leconte de Lisle's *Qain*,¹ the problem of the inspiration for this important poem has been a favorite hunting ground for scholars. Literary formulations of revolt and poetic descriptions of the Biblical past have come under close scrutiny in efforts to determine the point of departure for this striking protest which so often serves—exaggeratedly—to characterize Leconte de Lisle's antitheistic bias. Milton, Goethe, Byron, Lamartine, Quinet, Soumet, Nerval, Le Poittevin, Vigny, Hugo, Ménard, Bouilhet, Proudhon, Ludovic de Cailleux—all have had to do service in a constantly growing field of seminal writers. It is true that no new principal source has been suggested since Bernès, and the abundant literature on the subject would appear to discourage further attempts. Still, the attraction of the subject remains strong, and it is indeed a principal new source which I propose here, not a wholly new name—since Estève and Flottes have alluded to the possibility of a general debt to Lamartine²—but rather certain verses of Lamartine the precise effect of which has not, I think, been sufficiently observed, and still others which have entirely eluded attention in discussions of the problem.

The composition inspired by the tragedy of the Biblical fratricide is conceived, it will be recalled, as a grandiose drama consisting of three parts: the description of the monstrous setting of Hénokhia, "ville de l'angoisse et de la solitude," which forms a kind of vast tomb for Qain; then, following the brusque intrusion by the celestial horseman, the awakening of the accursed rebel, who launches into an impassioned diatribe denouncing cosmic evil; and finally the almost hallucinatory vision of the great flood, out of which emerges the ark destined to avenge suffering humanity—the three parts framed for purposes of artistic unity in the dream of Thogorma the seer. For the first section it is established—the proof coming originally from Bernès—that Leconte de Lisle drew generously from the striking descriptions of the prose poem *Le Monde antédiluvien*, published in 1845 by Ludovic de Cailleux. This is one of the clues which permit us to date the conception of the piece—published much later, in 1869—sometime soon after the arrival of Leconte de Lisle in Paris.

As for the central section, the strophes in which the thought of the poem is elaborated, there has been much discussion concerning the

¹ Henri Bernès, "Le *Qain* de Leconte de Lisle et ses origines littéraires," *RHLF* (1911), pp. 485-502.

² Edmond Estève, *Leconte de Lisle* (Paris, n. d.), p. 74; Pierre Flottes, *Le Poète Leconte de Lisle* (Paris, 1929), pp. 175-76.

influence of Byron, whose Biblical "mysteries" *Cain* and *Heaven and Earth* Leconte de Lisle knew and deeply admired. In his work on Leconte de Lisle's sources, J. Vianey briefly indicated the relationship between the two poems bearing the same title;³ Bernès added several "rapprochements"; and a few years later Estève developed the comparison in his valuable study on Leconte de Lisle's Byronism.⁴ On the other hand, Estève (p. 74) passes with but a cursory allusion to Lamartine's *Le Désespoir* and *Novissima verba* as well as to three pieces by Vigny, all of which, he observes, represent the endless plaint about suffering voiced by poets since the beginning of the nineteenth century.

A close examination of *Le Désespoir*, which had so impressed the young Creole while he was still living in his native island that he took the trouble to transcribe it into his notebook,⁵ raises the question whether the impact of Lamartine on the conception of *Qain* has not been underestimated. Before Leconte de Lisle, Lamartine had been fascinated by the powerful lyricism of Byron as well as by his passion for justice and his indignation about the tribulations of the innocent. In the same collection (*Les Méditations*) in which the future author of *Solvet seclum* meditated over *Le Désespoir*, he could also have read the long poetic discourse dedicated to Byron, *L'Homme*, where, without ever pronouncing the name of Cain—the English "mystery" was not to appear until a year after the *Méditations*—Lamartine already seems to refute the blasphemies of the great rebel ("Ah! loin de l'accuser, Baise plutôt le joug que tu voudrais briser"). Leconte de Lisle's attention to this piece seems attested by the fact that later, in his essay on Lamartine, this is one of the three poems (along with *Le Lac* and *Novissima verba*) which, alone among the lyric collections of the romantic, are singled out for a commentary—and the judgment is severe: "Le jeune et indifférent auteur des *Méditations*," he writes, "eut l'irréparable malheur de réprimander avec une sévérité quelque peu puérile le poète de *Cain* et de *Manfred*, aux applaudissements injurieux des niais et des hypocrites."⁶

In Leconte de Lisle's mind, then, Byron and Lamartine became intimately linked. This was all the more true because Lamartine, who in *L'Homme* chides Byron for his revolt, shows himself far more indulgent to the Byronic type of hopelessness in *Le Désespoir*: "C'était byronien," he later wrote in his Commentary, "mais c'était Byron sincère et non joué." Could Leconte de Lisle have learned to appreciate Byron through the author of the *Méditations*? Is there merely a general resemblance in theme and tone between *Le Désespoir*

³ Joseph Vianey, *Les Sources de Leconte de Lisle* (Montpellier, 1907), pp. 294-96. "C'est bien... des hardiesses d'une [œuvre]," writes Vianey, "que dérivent en partie les hardiesses de l'autre, et c'est dans la bouche du Cain anglais que l'on retrouvera le thème des plus éloquentes récriminations du Qain français."

⁴ RLC (April-June, 1925), pp. 264-97.

⁵ Marius-Ary Leblond, *Leconte de Lisle* (Paris, 1906), p. 18.

⁶ *Le Nain Jaune* (1864); appended to *Derniers poèmes*, p. 251.

and *Qain*, or are there such precise reminiscences in the latter as to suggest that Leconte de Lisle may have had his Lamartine open before him as he fashioned certain lines of his poem?

Lamartine observes the universality of suffering and lends Nature a voice with which to lament:

Tout gémit; et la voix de la nature entière
Ne fut qu'un long soupir....
Qu'une plainte éternelle accuse la nature,
Et que la douleur donne à toute créature
Une voix pour gémir.

The same groan, the same sigh, the same lament, and the same sorrow characterize Nature in Leconte de Lisle, but with the addition of more picturesque detail:

Tout gémit, l'astre pleure et le mont se lamente,
Un soupir douloureux s'exhale des forêts,
Le désert va roulant sa plainte et ses regrets,
La nuit sinistre, en proie au mal qui la tourmente,
Rugit comme un lion sous l'étreinte des rets.

There is nothing of the kind in Byron's *Cain*, aside perhaps from these lines spoken by Lucifer, surely far less charged with emotion and somewhat different in meaning:

And if there should be
Worlds greater than thy own...
All living and all doomed to death, and wretched,
What wouldst thou think? (*Cain*, II, 1)

In Lamartine, God acknowledges the failure of his creation from the beginning: "De son œuvre imparfaite il détourna sa face..." Leconte de Lisle will naturally be harsher; he will thus aggravate the idea of an abortive work with that of a deceitful apology by the creator: "Dieu qui mentais, disant que ton œuvre était bon." (In Byron, Lucifer qualifies all those who resist as "Souls who dare look the Omnipotent tyrant in / His everlasting face, and tell him, that / His evil is not good!" [*Cain*, I, 1].)

Already in *Le Désespoir* we find the identification of evil with existence itself, as well as the protest against the necessity of accepting a present man has never asked for.

Quel crime avons-nous fait pour mériter de naître?
L'insensible néant t'a-t-il demandé l'être...?

And *Qain* takes up this oburgation.

Quel mal ai-je fait?...
Et pour penser: Je suis! pour que la fange vive,
Ai-je troublé la paix de l'éternel sommeil?...
O misère! Ai-je dit à l'implacable Maître...
La vie assurément est bonne, je veux naître!

⁷ The same idea occurs in *La Foi*, also in *Les Méditations*: "Si l'on m'eût consulté, j'aurais refusé l'être..."

(Byron's Cain had also asked:

What had I done in this?—I was unborn:
I sought not to be born; nor love the state
To which that birth has brought me.
(*Cain*, I, 1)

Here it becomes more difficult to decide between the two sources; we notice, nevertheless, that Lamartine alone explicitly mentions the original void, to which Leconte de Lisle in turn refers.)

In both French poets, Man feels himself condemned even before birth:

Et la mort étouffant, dès le sein de leurs mères,
Les germes des humains! (*Le Désespoir*)
Dès le ventre d'Héva maudit et condamné...
(*Qain*)

(The English Cain says of his father:

Cursed he not me in giving me my birth?
Cursed he not me before my birth, in daring
To pluck the fruit forbidden? (*Cain*, II, 2)

The two Frenchmen, on the other hand, are concerned with the mother, and the similarity of expression can hardly fail to be noted.)

Finally, Lamartine envisions a heavy heritage of sorrow passing from generation to generation till the end of time; and Leconte de Lisle adopts the image:

Les enfants héritant l'iniquité des pères...
Héritiers des douleurs, victimes de la vie...
(*Le Désespoir*)
Misérable héritier de l'angoisse première...
(*Qain*)⁸

There can obviously be no question here of dismissing the influence of Byron in *Qain*, since a number of indications pointed out by critics, which seem indeed to reveal a filiation with the Englishman, have no counterpart in Lamartine: Cain's love of his brother, for example, or the distant view of Eden from which Cain is forever banished and which is guarded by the flaming sword of the Angel. We must ask, however, whether the Byronic elements of lament and decial were first filtered through the author of *Novissima verba* before reaching Leconte de Lisle. The resemblances of imagery and expression in the verses of the two French poets seem to suggest a relationship which can hardly be explained simply by the subject matter, and lend themselves to the supposition that the idea of an immense lamentation over undeserved punishment and revolt against an existence imposed on man against his own will could have sprung at least as easily from a reading of Lamartine as from a reading of Byron. Let

⁸ This denial of progress is similarly expressed by Leconte de Lisle elsewhere: "Léguant votre misère à de vils héritiers" (*Aux Morts*); "Homme, héritier de l'homme et de ses maux accrus" (*L'Anathème*).

us see, now, whether this hypothesis can be confirmed by another piece of evidence.

As Qain's discourse develops, it grows ever more embittered, moving from complaint to indignation and swelling to violent recrimination, finally turning into open revolt and a prophecy of eventual liberation. For this inflamed denunciation of God, Proudhon, rather than Byron, has been taken as the most direct influence. The reference here is to certain pages of a harsh essay *De la Providence*, published in 1846 in the volume *Système des contradictions économiques*, in which Proudhon inveighs against God for all the misfortunes of the world, casts anathema at the divine Malefactor, and predicts the collapse of his dominion. This possible influence was first pointed out by Bernès; and in the most recent and thorough study of *Qain*, Alison Fairlie concludes:

In the face of such analogies it is difficult not to admit that although Byron had contributed much to Leconte de Lisle's passion for pride and revolt, and though his *Cain* and *Ciel et Terre* were no doubt in Leconte de Lisle's mind at the time of the planning of *Qain*, yet just as Cailleur was the main source for setting and symbol, so Proudhon was the more direct influence for the development of the thought.⁹

The difficulty here is that nowhere does Leconte de Lisle show any real knowledge of Proudhon's works. Fernand Calmettes, who knew the poet in his later years, observes that "Leconte de Lisle avait témoigné, malgré quelques dissentiments, tant de ferveur admirative" for Proudhon.¹⁰ Nothing more precise is supplied. All that we know with certainty is the vehement decrial of Proudhon in one of the letters of 1849, in which the Socialist theoretician is reviled by the poet as a "misérable économiste" who prepared the betrayal of the Republic by "une série d'articles abrutissants" undermining the principles of 1789; and Leconte de Lisle ironically pities the exiled Ménard for being deprived of the pleasure of contemplating "l'aspect auguste de Proudhon!"¹¹ To be sure, Proudhon's diatribes were well known in progressive circles before the Revolution of 1848, and the cry "Dieu, c'est le mal!" had caused a sensation. Thus Leconte de Lisle might have learned about Proudhon's notion of a war against God through ordinary conversation, and he might then have read the essay. If, however, we could find the same lesson preached elsewhere in an analogous tone, if this lesson were already to be found in a poetic source, if, in addition, this source were almost certainly known to Leconte de Lisle—a source, incidentally, which Proudhon himself

⁹ Alison Fairlie, *Leconte de Lisle's Poems on the Barbarian Races* (Cambridge, 1947), p. 263.

¹⁰ Fernand Calmettes, *Leconte de Lisle et ses amis* (Paris, n. d.), p. 204.

¹¹ Letter dated July 15, 1849 (*Le Figaro*, Supplément littéraire, Aug. 4, 1895, quoted in Leblond, p. 238); letter of April 17, 1849 (quoted by Henri Peyre, *Louis Ménard* [New Haven, 1932], p. 75). We may wonder if it was not precisely these letters which Calmettes (born in 1846) had in mind when he speaks of "dissentiments," and if his information went any further. (He refers to the letters on pp. 33, 62-63 of his volume.)

may have had before him as he wrote certain phrases of his essay— if, finally, this poetry seems to have left some trace even in the rhythm of *Qain*, would we not be tempted to see it as an even more direct source than Proudhon?

Now, in 1830 Lamartine published in his *Harmonies*, under the title *La Mort de Jonathas*, a fragment of his tragedy *Saül*, comprising three scenes of the last act. We can scarcely doubt that Leconte de Lisle was thoroughly familiar with the *Harmonies*, which, in the essay on Lamartine, he rates far superior to the *Méditations* both in technique and thought. The somber composition *Novissima verba* is distinguished by Leconte de Lisle as an example of the excellence of the collection. And only twenty pages farther on, the reader of 1830 or 1846 could have read the conclusion of *Saül*.

Obsessed by his fear of a rival, believing his realm lost and his army destroyed by the enemy, the king of the Israelites is about to take his life, when he remembers his beloved son, sets out in search of him, and finally discovers him, fatally wounded and drowning in his blood. Crushed with grief, Saül thereupon gives vent to his bitterness, rises furiously against God, and explodes in invective. The tirade deserves to be quoted almost in toto, for it reveals an ardor which does not depend on the details, an orgy of passion which seems to detonate in the work of the gentle author of the *Harmonies*.

Non! je ne veux de toi ni bienfait ni pardon!
 Dieu cruel, Dieu de sang, je te brave et t'outrage!
 Tout ton pouvoir ne peut avilir mon courage!
 Tu l'emporte, il est vrai; mais lorsque tu m'abats,
 Je me relève encor pour insulter ton bras!
 Je ne me repens pas des crimes de ma vie:
 C'est toi qui les commis, et qui les justifie;
 C'est toi qui, de mes jours constant persécuteur,
 As semé sous mes pas les pièges du malheur;
 Et si l'excès des maux a produit l'injustice,
 Tu fus de mes forfaits la cause et le complice!
 —Tu les punis pourtant!...
 Et ton pouvoir cruel n'a formé les humains
 Que pour persécuter l'ouvrage de tes mains!
 Eh bien! par mon supplice exerce ta puissance;
 Assourvis tes regards, jouis de ma souffrance;
 Jouis! mais hâte-toi de l'épuiser sur moi:
 Le néant où je cours va m'arracher à toi!

(V, vi)

The indictment is harsh, the style impassioned. Again we can hardly avoid thinking of Byron. But the tragedy was completed in April, 1818, while Lamartine informs us, in the Commentary of *L'Homme*, that he first heard of Byron in 1819.¹² The conception of the play must be related rather to Alfieri and the Bible.

¹² *Saül*, critical edition by Jean des Cognets (Paris, 1918), p. xvi. Actually, Lamartine first mentioned Byron in a letter of October 10, 1818, but probably did not become acquainted with his work before 1819. *Méditations poétiques*, critical edition by Gustave Lanson (Paris, 1915), p. 21.

If we except the final verse of the tirade, there is scarcely an idea here which does not find its counterpart in the blasphemies of Qaïn. Like Saül, who will accept from God neither kindness nor pardon, Qaïn becomes "celui qui ne sut ni fléchir ni prier." Saül rejects any responsibility for the wrongs he has committed; he assigns the blame for all the evil in the world to God himself:

Je ne me repens pas des crimes de ma vie :
C'est toi qui les commis et qui les justifie.

And Qaïn exonerates himself thus before his beloved brother :

O victime, tu sais le sinistre dessein
D'Iahvèh m'aveuglant du feu de sa colère.
L'iniquité divine est ton seul assassin.

It is God who delights in ensnaring his victim; here the image in the two poets is virtually identical.

C'est toi qui ...
As semé sous mes pas les pièges du malheur ...
(Saül)

J'ai heurté d'Iahvèh l'inévitable embûche ;
Il m'a précipité dans le crime tendu.
(Qaïn)

Then, not content with his black machinations, God pursues his hapless prey relentlessly :

Tu fus de mes forfaits la cause et le complice !
—Tu les punis pourtant !
(Saül)

Ai-je dit à l'argile inerte : Souffre et pleure !
Auprès de la défense ai-je mis le désir ...
Ai-je dit de vouloir et puni d'obéir ?
(Qaïn)

Proudhon, too, uses this same image, as well as the accusation of inconsequence: "Il creuse le fossé sous nos pieds, il nous fait aller en aveugles: et puis, à chaque chute, il nous punit en scélérats."¹³ Could Proudhon have had a copy of the *Harmonies* open before him? We may note not only the same accusations, not only the sequence of ideas, but the relationship even in the oratorical form.

C'est toi qui les [crimes] commis, et qui les justifie;
C'est toi qui, de mes jours constant persécuteur,
As semé sous mes pas les pièges du malheur.
(Saül)

And Proudhon declaims: "Les fautes dont nous te demandons la remise, c'est toi qui nous les fais commettre: les pièges dont nous te conjurons de nous délivrer, c'est toi qui les as tendus."¹⁴ Nowhere in the sources suggested thus far—save Proudhon—do we find this bitter apostrophe flung in the face of God. Would not a reading of these phrases in Proudhon inevitably have recalled to the poet the

¹³ *Système des contradictions économiques* (Paris, 1867), p. 356.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 360.

earlier tirade of Saül? For Leconte de Lisle knew his Lamartine, particularly, according to all evidence, the elements of doubt and despair. But let us come back to the passage of *Saül*.

God has been cast by Lamartine's king in the role of supreme tormentor:

Et ton pouvoir cruel n'a formé les humains
Que pour persécuter l'ouvrage de tes mains!

Thus for Leconte de Lisle's Qaïn, God becomes the "tourmenteur du monde et des vivants." And it is not merely a question of persecuting innocent mankind; the punishment is turned into a kind of diabolical glee: "Assouvis tes regards, jouis de ma souffrance" (*Saül*). The thought had already been expressed in *Le Désespoir* by the poet caught in the throes of doubt:

Ou plutôt, Dieu cruel, fallait-il nos supplices
Pour ta félicité?¹⁸

Qaïn echoes the idea:

Dieu de la foudre...
Qui te plais aux sanglots d'agonie...

By reaction to this cruelty, Saül is forced into desperate revolt. His divine adversary may crush him with might and malice, the judgment is rejected, and the victim will never surrender.

Dieu cruel, Dieu de sang, je te brave et t'outrage!
Tout ton pouvoir ne peut avilir mon courage!
Tu l'emporte, il est vrai; mais lorsque tu m'abats,
Je me relève encor pour insulter ton bras!

Here the resemblance becomes truly impressive. In *Hélène* (1852), Leconte de Lisle had already experimented with this chanted type of denial: "O Dieux cruels, Dieux sourds! ô Dieux, je vous renie!" He returns to this inverted litany in *Qaïn*, more amply intoning the recriminations against the enemy:

Dieu triste, Dieu jaloux qui dérobes ta face,
Dieu qui mentais disant que ton œuvre était bon,
Mon souffle, ô Pétrisseur de l'antique limon,
Un jour redressera ta victime vivace,
Tu lui diras: Adore! Elle répondra: Non!

In rhythm, and even in tone, I do not think we can equate with this passage the diffuse and somewhat coarse development of Proudhon:

Esprit menteur, lui répondrai-je, Dieu imbécile, ton règne est fini; cherche parmi les bêtes d'autres victimes... Et maintenant te voilà détrôné et brisé... Car Dieu, c'est sottise et lâcheté; Dieu, c'est hypocrisie et mensonge; Dieu, c'est tyrannie et misère; Dieu, c'est le mal.¹⁹

¹⁸ Byron, on the other hand, had written (*Cain*, II, 2): "Even he who made us must be [wretched], as the maker Of things unhappy!" And similarly (*Cain*, I): "He! so wretched in his height, So restless in his wretchedness..."

¹⁹ *Système*, pp. 359-60. The notion of a lying God, however, does appear to stem from Proudhon.

What remains, to be sure, is Qain's prophecy of the eventual victory, nowhere to be found in Lamartine. Was it Proudhon who suggested to Leconte de Lisle the idea of crowning his poem with a notion wholly exceptional in his work, which deplores the disappearance of the gods¹⁷ and foresees man's degeneracy linked with his loss of the divine spirit?¹⁸ It is possible. Lamartine could scarcely have attributed to a Biblical character the intention of dethroning God. He does what he can. He has Saül defy God, and ends by granting him an escape through self-avenging death. It is a victory in its way.

Jouis! mais hâte-toi de l'épuiser sur moi:
Le néant où je cours va m'arracher à toi!

Qain's defiance is not very different: "Ecrase-moi, sinon, jamais je ne ploirai!" Only the form of the ultimate vengeance separates the two poets, the one a disturbed believer, and the other a despairing atheist.

If these resemblances are not the result of pure coincidence or general reminiscence—and their very number, if not their precision, seems to confirm a direct influence—it would be fitting to grant Lamartine a generous share in the formation of one of Leconte de Lisle's most imposing compositions. As far as the thought of the poem is concerned (with the exception of the denouement), Leconte de Lisle did not need to seek out brilliant effects here and there; the germ of the entire idea of *Qain* is already contained in the two pieces by Lamartine, set in the concentrated form of French verse. The sovereign scorn which Leconte de Lisle heaped on "la horde cruelle et inexorable des élégiaques échappés de la barque d'Elvire," who followed in the traces of their master as though to punish him for his "radical scepticism" about poetry, is familiar to all. Lamartine himself had a nature which, said Leconte de Lisle, "me blesse et m'irrite dans toutes mes fibres sensibles." But the Parnassian has also openly proclaimed his "sincère admiration pour certaines parties de l'œuvre de M. de Lamartine,"¹⁹ where he could find greater virility and more intense passion, as well as a bolder outlook, than in the elegiac creations. These passages, "pleinement venus," must have left their mark. If we were to assemble the many sections which reveal singular coincidences between the two poets, there would, I think, be an interesting new item to add to the dossier "Romanticism of the Parnasse."

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¹⁷ For example, "Pour quel dieu désormais brûler l'orge et le sel" (*L'Anathème*); "Si vous êtes tous morts, qu'ai-je à faire en ce monde?" (*La Paix des Dieux*).

¹⁸ For example, "Laissant l'homme futur, indifférent et vieux, Se coucher et dormir en blasphémant les Dieux" (*Le Runoia*). Cf. the derisive sonnet *Aux Modernes*: "Hommes, tueurs de Dieux..."

¹⁹ Essay on Baudelaire (*Derniers poèmes*, p. 281); on Lamartine (*ibid.*, pp. 254, 250).

FIFTEENTH-CENTURY TRANSLATION THE DEVELOPMENT OF LAURENT DE PREMIERFAIT

By PATRICIA M. GATHERCOLE

Laurent de Premierfait merits attention as one of the most significant translators in the fifteenth century. He produced numerous renditions of classical and Italian works according to the methods of translation developed during his epoch, and he was the first to present to lay readers in France a coherent text of Boccaccio and Cicero. He translated Boccaccio's *De casibus virorum illustrium* (in 1400 and again in 1409), the *Decameron* (between 1411 and 1414), and possibly also the Italian master's *De claris mulieribus* (1416?). He is credited with a translation of Aristotle's *Economics* from a Latin version in 1418 and, at about the same time, a rendition of Seneca's *De quatuor virtutibus*.

Born in 1380 at the village of Premierfait in the province of Champagne, Laurent was a "clerc" at the diocese of Troyes during the early years of the fifteenth century. As secretary to Cardinal Amadeo di Saluzzo, he resided at the Papal Court of Avignon, where he became steeped in the nascent humanistic studies and took a keen interest in the moral and economic problems of his day.¹ One measure of his popularity as a writer is evidenced in the fact that there are today approximately 146 extant manuscripts of his translated works in various libraries and private collections throughout the world.

Few critics in recent years have concerned themselves with Laurent's translations, and none has elected to discuss his development as a medieval translator. H. Hauvette and A. Hortis examined general questions arising from his work in their volumes *De Laurentio de Primofato* (Paris, 1903) and *Studj sulle opere latine del Boccaccio* (Trieste, 1879). E. Koeppl, in his book *Laurent de Premierfaits und John Lydgates Bearbeitungen von Boccaccios De Casibus* (Munich, 1885), was interested primarily in the sources of Laurent's French version of *De casibus*. H. Bergen supplemented these earlier studies in his edition of the English paraphrase of Laurent's *Des Cas*, entitled *Lydgate's Fall of Princes* (Washington, 1927).

The problems pertaining to the manuscripts of Laurent's works have been touched upon by George Sarton in his *Introduction to the History of Science*, III (Baltimore, 1948). Further information regarding Laurent has been explored in articles by G. S. Purkis (*Italian Studies*, IV [1949]), Florence Smith (*RLC*, XIV [1934]), and by the present author (*French Review*, XXVII [1954]; *Italica*, XXXII

¹Laurent earned a living in Paris by translating for such illustrious patrons as Louis de Bourbon, Bureau of Dampmartin, and Jean, Duke of Berry. He is said to have died in 1418.

[1955]; *MLQ*, XVII [1956] and XIX [1958]). This essay will describe the studied and gradual growth of Laurent as a translator from uncertain beginnings until his death in 1419.

At the outset of his career, Laurent groped for his way as a translator. Following current precepts, he believed that translators should be free to improve upon original texts by lengthening or expanding them. In the introduction to his first translation, *De la ruyne des nobles hommes et femmes* (Boccaccio's *De casibus*, a long didactic treatise of 1353 that portrays the downfall of famous men from high station), Laurent mentioned his desire to expand the text of the original Latin so that he might clarify it for the reader: "Certainement nous escripsseurs desirons et commes constrains par une couverte gloire de anoblir et alongier nos foible livres par les meilleurs aydes que nous povons."

Yet perhaps because he was still uncertain about the most effective way to undertake this task, Laurent, in 1400, shortly after his return to Paris, wrote a wholly literal translation of *De casibus*. Its closeness to the Latin is shown in such short phrases as "par raison" for "ratione" (Chap. 12, 8), "par mes petites lettres" for "literulis" (Chap. 12, 9), and "treschiers dons" for "praeclarissimis donis" (Chap. 14, 16).² The confused and troublesome phrasing which results from a word-by-word translation is evident in such passages as "entre quelconque tres noble que tu aimes mieulx: semble avoir plus acquis de noble gloire" (Chap. 18, 35), translated from the phrase "inter quoscumque mavis clarissimos plurimum inclyte gloriae quaesivisse videretur."

In the prologue to his next work, *De la vieillesse*, a French rendition of Cicero's *De senectute* which Laurent dedicated to Louis de Bourbon, he repeated his theory of translation, that is, to use a simple vocabulary easily understandable to the reader, but without losing the meaning of the original, and he remarked that he would lengthen what seemed too brief or obscure:

Et combien que le fardeau dont vous m'avez chargié surmonte la petitesse de mes forces. . . L'une pource que en langage vulgar ne peut estre gardee plainement art de rhetorique, je useray de paroles et de sentences promptement entendibles et cleres aux liseurs et escouteurs de ce livre sanz riens laisser qui soit de son essence, l'autre chose est que ce qui samble trop brief je le allongeray en exposant par motz et par sentences. (BN fr. 24285, f. 228)

Laurent exemplified these ideas in some sections of his translations of this classic. He added concise explanations of geographical names by carefully situating places specified in the Latin text; e.g., "Aetna" becomes "celle montaigne de Sicile appelee Ethna" (f. 4b); "Tarentum" is "Tarent qui est en Pueille" (f. 7a). Personal names he seldom cited without offering supplementary information; e.g., "The-

² The Latin edition was published in Paris by J. Gormontie and J. Parve in 1525 (?). All quotations from *De la ruyne des nobles* are from the first Colard Mansion edition (Bruges, 1476).

mistocles" is "un noble de Athenes" (f. 6a); "magister Leontinus Gorgias" becomes "un philosophe appellé Gorgias, qui fut né d'un chasteau en Grece appellé Laonem" (f. 8b). Impelled by his religious bent as "clerc," Laurent summarily explained moral references of the original version: "exercitationesque virtutem" he developed into "les excercitacions des vertuz principales, c'est assavoir de l'atrempeance, prudence, force et justice" (f. 6b). To assist the reader further in understanding the text, the French translator sometimes lengthened the original by using doublets; e.g., "ennuyeuse et pesante" for "gravem" and "plus grief et pesant" for "gravius" (BN fr. 1020, f. 4b). Considered as a whole, however, Laurent's additions to the original *De senectute* are rather short. Several parts of the translation remain quite literal, probably because of the fifteenth-century construction; Laurent allowed himself to be carried away only in the sections that he felt needed clarification.

In the preface to *De la vraye amitié*, the Ciceronian dialogue *De amicitia*, Laurent again expounded for Louis of Bourbon and other worthy readers his favorite theories concerning translation. As in *De la vieillesse*, he wrote that he would use everyday language to facilitate general comprehension. He affirmed his religious interest even more strongly in this treatise, stating that he would elaborate upon moral passages. For the first time he mentioned specifically the sources for this additional didactic material: conclusions taken from Aristotle's book of *Ethics* which he appended to Cicero's work. He suggested these serious premises in the following terms:

Et en ces choses disant je useray de si appert et si commun language que les hommes moyennement lettrez me entendront entierement et tost secondement je mettray en somme et soubz briefce tout ou la plus grant partie des conclusions ou sentences mises et affermees par Aristote en ses deux livres de Ethiques cy paravant nommez. (BN fr. 1020)

He commented upon the poverty of the French language, "mon langage vulgaire qui par nécessité de motz est petit et legier," but gently reminded his patron and audience that others had previously translated the Bible into the vulgar tongue.

Laurent's translation of *De amicitia* (1405-1409), like that of *De senectute*, shows explanatory material added to the original. Laurent described geographical names as he had done in *De la vieillesse*; e.g., "Agrigentinum quiden" becomes "En Sicile aupres de la mer est une cité nommee Agrigentine. Illec jadiz fut ung poete" (f. 65b). He defined words for the purpose of ethical teaching; e.g., "sapientes" is clarified by "stoiques disans nul homme estre saige se il cheoit mesmement en aucun legier pechié" (f. 63b).

At about this time he introduced a new element into his translations: realistic comparisons. The style of *De la vraye amitié* he made more verbose by employing this device: "Mais je juge et advise en amitié cest premiere chose que amitié ne peut si non entre bons hommes. Et combien que ainsi soit-il si ne trenche je pas la char

tranchent la char pourrie..." (BN fr. 1020, f. 63a). Furthermore, he adopted the use of personification, according to the manner of the time, referring, for example, to "Dame Nature" and "Dame Chasteté."

In 1409 Laurent decided that his first version of Boccaccio's *De casibus virorum illustrium* was grossly inadequate and that he should formulate more clearly his principles of translation. In the preface to his second rendition, dedicated to Jean, Duke of Berry, he repeated his theory of amplification of the original text. He was more certain about the portions which he intended to lengthen, "les sentences du livre et les histoires" where Boccaccio had mentioned only names. He affixed another element: he specified his sources, the classics.³ He gave informative additions from history books depicting celebrated classical, mythological, or Biblical characters, such as Paris, Circe, and Moses.

As in preceding instances, Laurent the teacher appears when he deals with geographical and personal names. His translation, *Des Cas de nobles hommes et femmes*, was nearly three times as long as its Latin original. Besides wanting to educate his contemporaries in the field of classical learning, he pursued his desire to improve their morals and did not hesitate to attach passages that related the wicked deeds of past heroes with their resultant downfall. With this popular work, the classical-minded and moralistic Laurent had reached the climax of his career as translator, as is evident from the sixty-five manuscripts in existence today.

It is difficult to judge competently Laurent's translation of the *Decameron*, since the extant manuscripts are so dissimilar and since there is general agreement among scholars that the manuscript bearing Laurent's original rendition has been lost. We do have his short prologue of four folios that describes the translator's preferred theory of expansion, namely, that he would lengthen passages which he considered too brief to be clear and that he would do away with the obscure language of Boccaccio and of Antonio of Arezzo (Laurent used the latter's Latin version for his rendition) in favor of simple speech: "je Laurens assistant avec lui, ay secondement converty en françois le langage latin receu dudit frere Anthoine... fors que j'ay estendu le trop bref en plus long et le obscur en plus cler langage."

Cent Nouvelles, written between 1411 and 1414 and dedicated to the Duke of Berry,⁴ shows numerous changes, amplifications, and explanations on the folios of several manuscripts. The text of the *Decameron*, like that of *De casibus*, lends itself easily to expansion, and the learned cleric Laurent, recognizing the opportunity to apply one of his principles of translation, lengthened Tale Nine of Day 1

³ Laurent borrowed from Paulus Orosius, Justin, Livy, Valerius Maximus, Lucan, St. Jerome, St. Isidore, Ovid, and many others. See E. Koeppl, *passim*.

⁴ Laurent's translation was published by "la vefne feu Michel le noir" in Paris in 1521, and there were at least ten other editions. The rendition has been severely criticized, partly because it was judged by these corrupt editions. Antoine Le Maçon's translation, published in 1545, supplanted Laurent's.

from three hundred words to four pages. He commented especially upon historical facts and geographical names: for example, "Ne' tempi del primo re di Cipri" (I, 9) becomes

Une ysle est ou pays de midy maintenant nommee Chippre; cestui nom [lui] fut anciennement donné du nom d'une cité d'illec jadis nommee Cyprus, et qui paravant fut appelée Paphos. . . . En ceste ysle depuis pou de temps passé regna ung roy premierement nommé Guiot de Lisignan en Poictou. (Arsenal 5070)

In the interest of clarity, Laurent gallicized personal and place names mentioned in the text; e.g., "Grimaldi" becomes "Grimaulx." He appended moral observations that gave a different tone to the book. He omitted portions of Boccaccio's original text, and for no apparent reason he shortened the prologue of the first story, cutting down to twenty lines the arresting description of the plague. The manuscripts indicate that he frequently did not translate the introductions to stories, and he either neglected to translate the "ballata" found at the end of each day or substituted a different one.⁵

In the last work before his death, a 1418 translation of Aristotle's *Economics* from a Latin version, Laurent did not refer to the art of translation in any prolix introduction. He probably thought that he had solved the thorny problem. His rendition, the *Yconomiques*, followed his usual method of translation. He supplied innumerable short explanatory passages and engaged frequently in learned allusions to other writings of Aristotle, such as his *Politics* and *Ethics*. Continually concerned with the reader's comprehension, he defined words like "monos" which "en grec signifie un et archos signifie prince" (BN fr. 1020, f. 93b). This treatise discloses the same tricks of style found in his previous translations: a purposeful repetition of "et" and "ou," together with an excessive number of couplets.

A French version of Seneca's *De quatuor virtutibus* (1403) has been attributed by some critics to Laurent, by others to Jehan Courtecuisse. The prologue of *Des quatre vertus* resembles closely other Laurent prefaces: the translator humbly flatters his patron the Duke of Berry and emphasizes his didactic purpose. He discusses the process of translation and admits that he may not always understand fully the original text because of its ambiguity: "les sentences sont moult haultes et eslevees et las estraint souvent de grandes sentences en peu de parolles" (BN fr. 1020, f. 123a).

The French translation of *De quatuor* appears to be characteristically the work of Laurent. Well-known stories about classical figures are added in sections designated as "gloses." References to classical writers (Ovid, Virgil, Seneca, Terence), a technique typical of Laurent, occur repeatedly. Moral maxims supplement the original volume. Furthermore, *De quatuor* certainly has the kind of didactic sub-

⁵ There are some passages, however, in which Laurent's translation of the *Decameron* closely resembles the Italian. G. S. Purkis maintains ("A Bodleian *Decameron*," *Medium Evum*, IX [1950], 67) that the copies found in England are earlier and less corrupt than the French. The manuscripts BN fr. 129 and Arsenal 5070 are among the first copies of *Cent Nouvelles* in France.

ject that would attract the French writer. The style of *Des quatre vertus*, although reminiscent of the time, recalls especially Laurent's mode of writing, particularly in the amount of detail presented. Repetitious, complicated sentences fill many pages; the use of couplets, the everyday comparisons, and the tedious employment of "et" and "ou," characteristic of Laurent, form an integral part of the narrative.⁶

Laurent was one of the first in France to think seriously about the art of translation and to express his theories on the subject. Whereas the comments of his predecessors on this art are indefinite and confused, his remarks are intelligibly expressed and amply detailed. His skill as a translator he developed over a period of years; greater clarity of thought and, to some extent, of style become more evident with each new work. At the beginning, uncertain in his purpose, he translated literally. He soon came to realize, however, that translations such as *De la ruyne des hommes* were so stilted and obscure that they repulsed the princes for whom they were intended. The energetic Laurent decided that he would have to improve his style by explaining any phrase that was not clear. He would, therefore, explicate geographical names and add stories from the classics. He sought to make his style more vivid by using comparisons and personifications. If he erred in composing sentences that were too lengthy, he was at least following the method of his translator friends.

A cleric and teacher at heart, his didactic tendencies became more pronounced as he grew older. His output was extremely large, and if we were to judge by the number of extant manuscripts, his works enjoyed great popularity and exercised a notable influence⁷ on his contemporaries and successors not only in France, but in other European countries as well. The translations of Laurent are interesting when compared with their originals in that they give vivid insight into a French mind of the fifteenth century and bring to light the methods of translation employed during the late Middle Ages.

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⁶ The French translation of another work, Boccaccio's *De claris mulieribus*, done in 1401, has also been variously assigned by critics. The subject of *Des Cleres*, consisting of short biographies of famous women, is similar to that of *Des Cas*. The introduction, which reveals the humble attitude of the translator and the exaggerated praise of royalty, recalls the work of Laurent. The gross negligence of the style, resulting at times in sheer nonsense, makes Laurent's authorship of the treatise highly questionable.

⁷ The works of several members of the Pléiade in the succeeding century manifest certain traits of Laurent's theory and practice of translation. Laurent's translations themselves influenced several European writers. The French *Décameron*, for instance, led to collections of French tales like the *Heptaméron*. John Lydgate's *Fall of Princes* was based on Laurent's *Des Cas*.

REVIEWS

Divine Poetry and Drama in Sixteenth-Century England. By LILY B. CAMPBELL. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press; Cambridge: At the University Press, 1959. Pp. viii + 268. \$5.00.

With this present study, *Divine Poetry and Drama in Sixteenth-Century England*, Miss Lily B. Campbell adds another important work to her many contributions to our understanding of English Renaissance drama. Since William Nelson's review for *Renaissance News* is oriented toward "Divine Poetry" (Part I of Miss Campbell's book), it may be useful here to stress "Divine Drama." Miss Campbell's interesting thesis—though one might take issue with her method of demonstration—warrants this emphasis.

The main concern of the book is a comprehensive examination of the Biblical material which some sixteenth-century writers poured into classical and Renaissance forms. The result is an important survey for any student of the period, especially if he is a Burckhardtian. But the author also sees these works as belonging to a form she calls "divine" literature, which was evolved as "a determined movement" against "the influence of the revival of classical learning and the developing taste for pagan and secular story and song." Such works were a "studied attempt to oppose the pagan and secular literature seeming to many good men to lead the people away from God." Furthermore, the author states that "divine" literature is not to be defined in terms of any devotional ethics which might inform it, but strictly in terms of its subject matter, which is Biblical.

Such a definition, though usefully regulating the limits of a survey, does raise some questions when it is proposed as the articulation of a religious and literary movement. According to this view, devout and learned men would seriously expect to use literature as a weapon not by committing themselves to those values which would inform their work, but by literally adhering to a specific subject matter. At issue here, also, is an implicit description of the English Renaissance which assumes a sharper dichotomy between "Christian" and "secular" than many scholars will admit; and, if established, this description would seriously challenge a number of theories regarding Renaissance religious and artistic attitudes. Furthermore, since some scholars do not hold that classical material was devoid of Christian significance, or do not admit that an interest in the secular implied a rejection of Christian ethic, the author should not leave undefended the assumptions underlying the discussion of this "divine" movement. At any rate, one might also request a statement as to how far subject matter may define artistic activity—for instance, how usefully can one speak of *Hamlet* and *Othello* as sharing the same genre because their "subject matter" is revenge.

Once defined, however, a movement can attain historical reality if its principles have been set forth in unequivocal, contemporary statements. Lacking these, one might wish, instead, to establish qualitative or quantitative criteria for identifying a "movement" and to adduce a number of works which persistently conform to principles from which one could infer both social motivation and some consistent adherence to certain artistic concepts. A survey-examination of Biblical plays is not sufficient *per se* to show that they were part of such a movement. Nor can statements as ambiguous as this by Bacon support the point: to teach "nothing but the doctrine of heathen and prophane writers" corrupts youth. Heathen writers should be used "not that they should be mates

with Gods word, but rather handmaids unto it, and serve to set forth the honour and glory thereof." Miss Campbell notes: "it was in this spirit of making dramas serve the purposes of Christian education that these schoolmasters and their followers undertook to create a Christian drama." But does it follow that Becon's desire to use pagan writings with reference to Christian doctrine led to the continental infusion of Biblical plots into pagan forms or to the creation of any new kind of play? And is it to the point for the author to follow up her statement with a listing of the classical elements utilized in continental Biblical dramas? Similarly, with the 1597 (London?) edition of Buchanan's *Poemata*, can the mere labeling of his two Biblical plays as *Tragoediae Sacrae* and of his translations from Euripides as *Tragoediae Externae* really demonstrate "the divine and secular drama in opposition"?

Statistics are also a problem. Golding's translation (1577) of Beza's *Abraham* must be noted because it was the only continental Biblical drama in the vernacular to have found its way to England. The preface accords with Miss Campbell's thesis; and she suggests that consistory approval for its printing at Geneva shows its representative nature for an important segment of thought. But, at Geneva between 1546 and 1568, only two plays (if Chambers has been exhaustive) were allowed performance, and one of these was a comedy of Terence (1549).

Similarly, in her useful exposition of Biblical plays acted and written in England, Miss Campbell concludes that "the very list of these English writers is impressive. Grimald, Watson, Christopherson, Foxe, and Udall, were all men of consequence in the sixteenth century." But what constitutes "a determined movement"? Harbage's list of Anglo-Latin plays shows fifteen out of 131 with remotely or specifically Biblical titles, and Boas' university list shows fifteen out of 111. Only Bradner's list of neo-Latin dramas shows a large number of specifically Biblical titles and *Tragoediae Sacrae* collections. These appeared on the continent and suggest the possible limits of Miss Campbell's thesis, which has also to reckon with the survival of only two English public plays and fourteen recorded public-play titles that even deal with Biblical topics between 1576 and 1602.

J. LEEDS BARROLL

University of Cincinnati

Ben Jonson and the Language of Prose Comedy. By JONAS A. BARISH. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960. Pp. xii + 335. \$5.00.

Jonas A. Barish's book has usefulness beyond the field of Jonson studies. It defines a mode of which Jonson was unquestionably the master, but it also helps us to recognize and assess that mode in the equally expert hands of Shakespeare and Swift and in the less gifted hands of writers like Marston, Wycherley, and Eugene O'Neill. The mode is linguistic satire; the convention, or set of conventions, with which Jonson associated it is the "baroque style," as described in several essays by Morris W. Croll. Again and again, as Barish shows in his second chapter, Jonson's prose exemplifies those characteristics which Croll associated with the reaction against Ciceronianism—spontaneity, freedom from rhetorical restraints and commitments, "natural" asymmetry as opposed to artificial balance—and it was these characteristics with their suggestion of "realism" that made his satire on contemporary language effective.

But Barish sees more in Jonson's use of baroque style than this. Throughout

his book Jonson stands forth as one compelled by an intense subjectivity to get himself down on paper even though committed by all conscious convictions to preserve a classical objectivity. "Asymmetrical," Barish writes, "seems to define the shape of Jonson's prose so exactly that one is tempted to use it to describe the topography of his mind" (pp. 56-57). He does not altogether resist that temptation.

For example, in Jonson's rejection of the causally connected Ciceronian period, Barish detects a fundamental inability to recognize a causally connected world like the one Shakespeare saw. This, he feels, is why Jonson tends to present a "kaleidoscopic series of characteristic stances" instead of genuine plot and even in his mature work makes use of relatively simple sequences. This also explains why Jonson's characters tend to be fixed in their humors and as isolated from one another as are the rhetorical units in which they speak. He was incapable of conceiving a character like Shaw's Eliza Doolittle, whose character changes because her language changes; and he could not see that men's language sometimes reveals more than their folly and that men sometimes are better than they speak.

Yet for all this subjectivity in Jonson (Herbert Read has called it his "expressionism"), Jonson's commitment to objectivity does show up in a number of ways: primarily, of course, in his attempt to capture the raw material of heard conversation, but also in his attempt to measure that heard language, with its implications of folly, against a background of ethical standards and solid sense as reflected in a language of "healthy normalcy." In the first of these attempts, whether because of his rhetorical conventions or in spite of them, Jonson certainly succeeded; in the second, according to Barish, he failed. The background of solid sense with that language "pure and neat . . . yet plaine and customary" which he recommended in the *Discoveries* always resisted embodiment; and in the end he found himself and his own idiosyncratic language identified with that frail flesh and blood he had so mercilessly satirized.

Most of this book, however, is concerned with the positive examination of Jonson's linguistic satire, which may well turn out to be his most significant contribution to English comedy. Nevertheless, one may question whether it provides a really safe basis for any final evaluation of his achievement. Concentration upon it here has confirmed many of the traditional judgments against Jonson: that his characters are static, that his plots do not really move, that his last plays are "dotages," and that his masques cater to the indiscriminating taste of the courtly audience. Some of these judgments may continue to stand; but perceptive readers have questioned all of them from time to time, and one would like to see them challenged systematically and from a variety of perspectives by a critic of Barish's acumen.

J. A. BRYANT, JR.

Duke University

The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding. By IAN WATT. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1959. Pp. 319. \$1.95.

This paperback edition of a book first published in England in 1957 will find wide acceptance as a text for classes in the English novel. Furthermore, it should go far toward replacing Richardson among the great novelists—no longer (as he would prefer) the Jovian observer and the benign moralist, but brother-

and-sister-under-the-skin to Lovelace and Clarissa, a fallible mortal whose world of the unconscious is to be explored like theirs. Perhaps most of all, lovers of literature who long since resolved not to venture again into a bog of nearly a million and a half words "where armies whole have sunk" may find themselves actually rereading *Clarissa* under the stimulus of a keener analysis than that novel has ever before received.

The title does not mention Sterne, but the brief treatment accorded him is sympathetic and acute. On the other hand, Fielding is graduated without honors. His moral qualities and his wisdom about human affairs are admitted, but *Tom Jones* is presented as superficial and mechanical when examined under the strong light which has played on *Clarissa*. The notion of a "comic epic in prose" receives short shrift; Fielding's importance is sought in his achievement, not in his theory.

The interpretation of Defoe is in some respects the most—and the least—satisfactory part of the book. Certain important qualities and aspects of the novels are more clearly presented than they have ever been stated before. But the Defoe whose novels grew almost accidentally from a new arrangement of materials which the author had been collecting for a lifetime—an author who denied indignantly that he was writing novels at all—must appear at a disadvantage when contrasted with such conscious craftsmen as Richardson, Fielding, and Sterne. Ian Watt cites a recent judgment that *Robinson Crusoe* is one of the three novels that still retain their truth for those who have seen prisons and concentration camps; but he seems to attribute this lasting appeal to freedom from complicated technique, not to superior truth to life or deeper insight into human character.

The range of this study, from seventeenth-century philosophical realism to the taste of twentieth-century readers, results in some errors of detail. *Humphry Clinker* is misspelled, and three of Defoe's titles are incorrectly given. *The Shortest Way* was not Defoe's only ironical tract; there were many others, three of which almost caused Defoe to stand trial for his life as late as 1713. Dickory Cronke was in no way an expression of Defoe's views, but was (like the Second-Sighted Highlander) an excuse for introducing topical prophecies. Defoe's output in the year of *Moll Flanders* was not 1,500 pages, but more than 3,000, besides a major part of *The Daily Post* and the journals of Mist and Applebee.

There is no possibility that Defoe was brought up as a Baptist; he expressed complete indifference as to the methods of baptism, and his usual terms "Anabaptist" and "Antipedo-Baptist" were as opprobrious then as later. So far from padding out his writings as the editor of the 1738 *English Tradesman* alleged, he wrote for his 116 known printers and booksellers with such a constant sense of "copy" that he filled the allotted space even when his manuscript was sent from the northernmost part of Scotland. He is not known to have been required to cut any of his tracts, but several were expanded for republication; his *Roxana* has been considered so incomplete that a poor continuation by a stranger has been widely accepted as part of the text. If he had used the story of *Sir Charles Grandison* (for which Richardson needed more than 600,000 words), he would have slipped it into *Religious Courtship* as one of the brief "dialogues."

A more important fault is the overemphasis on materialistic values to sustain the thesis of economic individualism as a factor in the novel's development. Defoe did not die in the enjoyment of a coach and a country house, but hiding to avoid arrest by a professed creditor. So far from seeking wealth as a primary objective, he was the only English author who (for no possible self-advantage) stood in the pillory three times, was imprisoned four times, and

twice required a royal pardon to enable him to carry on his public work. After Defoe's death a hostile journalist editorialized: "in the main, he was in the interest of civil and religious liberty, in behalf of which he appeared on several remarkable occasions." A writer in the *Chicago Tribune* has expressed the same thought less elegantly by calling Defoe an "old jail-bird."

As for his principal characters, the two who sought wealth as an end—not as a means to integrity and independence—were a pirate and a kept mistress. Crusoe chartered a ship to provision the island he had given away, and he Christianized the savages he might otherwise have sold as slaves. In his less considerate youth he did sell Xury—most unwillingly—to a benevolent ship captain; but the exclusive privilege in the slave trade would have prevented him from taking Xury into Brazil as his own slave, and as a freed Moslem Xury would have faced the Inquisition.

Despite these and other errors regarding matters of fact or interpretation, the book is an exceptionally able and original study of its professed subject—the rise of the novel.

JOHN ROBERT MOORE

Indiana University

The Varied God: A Critical Study of Thomson's "The Seasons." By PATRICIA MEYER SPACKS. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Publications, English Studies, No. 21, 1959. Pp. ix + 190. \$4.00.

The aim of Mrs. Spacks's study is different from that of Alan McKillop's *The Background of Thomson's "Seasons."* Her purpose, as stated in the first chapter, is to investigate "the possible relation between Thomson's ideas about man and nature and his poetic techniques and achievements in *The Seasons.*" Her theory is also stated explicitly early in the book: "The most effective poetic fusion of aesthetic, emotional, and moral outlook takes place in *The Seasons* when nature is conceived as a vast pattern of order including man, and it is this concept which seems most essentially important to the poet."

The author devotes several chapters to the achievement and the weakness of *The Seasons*, the early form of "Winter," Thomson's cosmic view of nature, his use of description, of science, and of morality. She finds that Thomson's poetic achievement is highest in those parts of *The Seasons* which were written earliest, and in which Thomson views man as an integral part of nature, not as a mere observer. In those parts of the poem which were written later, and especially in the various revisions and additions, she notes that Thomson shows a growing tendency to regard man as separate from nature, and that the poetic quality of his work declines as he places "increasing emphasis on narrow moral concerns, as opposed to the strengthening concept of man as a part of the natural order." Her main thesis is not, of course, entirely new to students of Thomson. Most scholars have felt that the later portions of *The Seasons* show a decline in poetic quality and in the poet's feeling for nature. However, Mrs. Spacks's book is the first extended study of the question.

Since this study involves personal judgment as to the relative poetic quality of different passages, many readers will find themselves occasionally at odds with Mrs. Spacks's opinion. The majority, however, will probably agree with the validity of her main argument. At times she seems somewhat overanxious to make the poem fit her theory. For instance, on pages 52-53 she finds that three examples of periphrasis in "Winter," describing birds in terms of human beings,

"emphasize the closeness of the relation between the human and the natural world in the total pattern of natural order, and suggest the concept of the Great Chain of Being." This type of description of animals and birds in human terms is, of course, typical of all beast fables and dates back to Aesop and Homer. Nor is one more convinced when he reads on page 97 that the same type of periphrasis shows "The emphasis on man which has manifested itself in subtle ways throughout the poem," and on page 142 that the same device is "suggestive of the poet's increasing tendency to see science as important primarily in relation to man." Similar objection might be raised to the importance which the author lays upon Thomson's personification of the sun (p. 71). Since the sun was personified by the Greeks and by almost every primitive nation, Thomson's use of this device might be regarded as trite rather than significant.

These, however, are minor objections. In general, the study is sound and should be of interest to all students of Thomson.

ARTHUR L. COOKE

University of Kentucky

Francis Thompson: *La Vie et l'œuvre d'un poète*. By PIERRE DANCHIN. Paris: A.-G. Nizet, 1959. Pp. 552. 28.00 N.F.

Francis Thompson wrote two great poems: one in verse, called *The Hound of Heaven*, and one in prose, about Shelley. The rest of his output varies in quality, but all of it is interesting to the historian of poetry. The best parts of Pierre Danchin's book (originally written as a thesis for the degree of *docteur ès lettres* at the University of Paris) are those which consider Thompson as a craftsman, a standard-bearer of the metaphysicals in the swampy terrain of the nineties. With sympathy, insight, and precision, Danchin demonstrates the boldness and originality of Thompson's experiments, besides indicating his indebtedness to predecessors and contemporaries such as Crashaw, Shelley, and Patmore. This study may raise the standing of a poet who is too often classed with wispy beings like Dowson. Danchin asserts that Thompson belongs rather with Hopkins and can even be regarded as a precursor of Eliot. But he tries to judge the man on his own merits, independently of critical fashions; and, on the whole, he succeeds.

Like many enthusiasts, Danchin sometimes claims too much for his hero. He admits the two worst flaws in Thompson's poetry—shaky structure and uncontrolled abundance—and yet seems unaware that *The Hound of Heaven* not only transcends these faults, but is something more than "the greatest of the poet's odes," as he calls it. He points out that it embraces all the themes which he traces in Thompson's work—childhood, love, nature, suffering, poetry, and religion—and suggests that it earns its rank by largeness and loftiness of subject matter. To test this claim, try reading the ode at the same sitting with *An Anthem of Earth* or *From the Night of Forebeing*. The difference is not in scope or range, but in intensity. Thompson, as Danchin notes in an excellent chapter on poetics, believed in inspiration and also in the poet's ability to correct his work during composition, not only after. In writing *The Hound of Heaven*, he used that ability, and more: he surpassed himself.

Pierre Danchin's aim was to write a "scientific and systematic" study of "the thought which informs all of Thompson's poetry." This he has done, on a monumental scale. There are 132 pages on the poet's life, 361 pages on his work, and a critical bibliography listing 122 books and more than 200 articles. The

evidence for dating the poems is carefully considered, and there is a perceptive chapter on the prose. Especially good use is made of unpublished and uncollected material. Three volumes of this—mostly reviews—have been brought out in recent years by the Rev. Terence Connolly of Boston College. Danchin quotes remarkable passages from a review of Yeats, entitled "The Poet as Tinkerer," and from manuscript essays on such topics as marriage and symbolism, which do not appear in the Rev. Connolly's selections. A useful volume could be put together from the letters and notebooks alone. Perhaps Pierre Danchin could be persuaded to edit it.

FRANK W. JONES

University of Washington

Arnold Bennett: Primitivism and Taste. By JAMES HALL. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1959. Pp. xi + 159. \$4.00.

Many of us remember Arnold Bennett chiefly for his having been made a special kind of object lesson in a 1924 piece by Virginia Woolf. Suppose, she said, Mr. Bennett were traveling in a railway carriage with a Mrs. Brown (there are other novelists there, too, but they are not to our present point); what would he especially notice of her? Everything, and nothing. "He, indeed, would observe every detail with immense care." But, for all his powers of observation,

[he] has never once looked at Mrs. Brown in her corner. There she sits in the corner of the carriage—that carriage which is travelling, not from Richmond to Waterloo, but from one age of English literature to the next, for Mrs. Brown is eternal, Mrs. Brown is human nature, Mrs. Brown changes only on the surface...

Mr. Bennett does not "get inside" Mrs. Brown (or Hilda Lessways, who in Mrs. Woolf's belief is his best name for her), though he has conscientiously attended to the inventory of externals, to the baggage and luggage and property and furniture of her life.

It is true that Bennett ran up against a formidable barrier to critical estimation in the 1920's of Mrs. Woolf and James Joyce, and his name lost much of its early twentieth-century favor in the encounter. He was a novelist of externals, of groups and classes of persons; the real tensions in his fiction came from the degree of conflict possible in encounters of fairly obvious thematic divisions of character, class, society, taste, and loyalty. But, as James Hall says in his excellent and incisive study, Mrs. Woolf was, after all, making a special plea for her own kind of novel (p. 153); Mr. Bennett may have said more about Mrs. Brown than Mrs. Woolf had had the patience to hear. He was uneasy about "insides" and preferred to have nuances suggested by arrangements and patterns of objects and persons, clearly distinguished as to class and type of representation.

In the subtitle of his book, James Hall suggests that we take a fresh look at the scale of fictional values of Bennett's time and ours. The two terms are here used in a special sense. Generally, one's decision to renounce one extreme and to search for the virtues of another provides a beginning, a crucial decision (like those of Henry James's Newman and Thomas Hardy's Clym Yeobright) that leads to a "way of life" or a compromise way. But not all writers insist on extremes of either primitivism or taste; Mann, Forster, the early Lawrence, Conrad, and Warren, Hall says, "are all, in one way and another, mediators

between the aristocratic and the primitive." Into this company he admits "the best novels" of Arnold Bennett. "These men are at home in the two worlds, intensely desirous of reconciling the two by taking the best from both. Ultimately they may not be successful, but they do achieve, albeit sometimes sullenly, working compromises" (p. 6).

This suggestion and the very interesting uses made subsequently of it seem to me an entirely new and a most profitable way of reexamining much late Victorian and Edwardian fiction. It does not refute the contention that Bennett rarely transcended his skill in representing the externals of life, but it is a new perspective upon these externals. What Mrs. Woolf saw as Bennett's great weakness—his inability to "get inside"—may after all prove to be a strength, if we look at it in terms of Hall's commentaries. For the great social massiveness of characteristic provincial life is perhaps not unsuccessfully portrayed in terms of externals, which are themselves available to rather broad and even abstract generalities. Bennett's drama is the drama of the heavy conflict between choices in respect to a way of life; and these choices are symbolized in the externals of the Five Towns, of London, of Paris. They also argue a formidable conservatism, against which "revolt" seems futile and romantic, and the person who breaks away turns out in the end (as in the case of Sophia Baines of *The Old Wives' Tale*) to have been least fortunate in choosing.

Bennett did not, of course, have the range or subtlety of Henry James's perception. The progress from *The American* to *The Golden Bowl* is not matched in Bennett's work. But they were both concerned with the problem of moral and cultural mobility within the middle class. The difference lies both in the quality of the "externals" used by each and in the mannerisms associated with them. The two novelists did not have the same quality of scruple at all, and they differed substantially in their choice of the means used for presenting their moral dramas. Nothing of Bennett's finest work goes beyond the limitations of James's earliest. Much of it, as Hall admits, is not worth more than a first look. But the five novels which Hall claims for his best have the value and function of representing forms of social conflict that in their own way give a measure of insight. These forms depend upon the acts of viewing from the outside, judging in terms of personality clashes that are deeply imbedded in generations of social custom and usages, and, above all, seeing the moral issues of middle-class life in terms of the several settings whose values are known primarily through their crude dissimilarities.

James Hall has found what is essential in Bennett's work, and his astute and knowledgeable analyses of the major novels help, more than any other studies of them I have ever encountered, to show us how they may be read and used to our advantage. What emerges from these studies is a sense of English provincial substance and of its moral and cultural history. These insights are useful in making several associations that seem to me indispensable additions to literary criticism: those of property and propriety; of the force of inheritance, which may destroy rebellion by sheer conservative weight and power; of the pathos of illness and death, when these come to men of strong will; finally, and perhaps most significantly, the relationship of emotional dissatisfaction to the romantic lure of space, distance, of the "different thing" and the "different way of life." The effect of Paris upon Sophia Baines is comically different from its effect on James's Chad Newsome. Yet the conditions which initially stimulate the desire for Paris are not so sharply dissimilar as to make a look at both unprofitable. "Sophia rejects intense experience because she loves orderliness and does not have the stomach for the strange, the exciting, the eternally flexi-

ble" (p. 82). The implications of this remark suggest that Bennett and James were concerned with quite different sensibilities, and that, in exploring them, they made valuable contributions to the study of the human comedy. Bennett's value lies in his sense of the heavy, solid, inescapable specification of the provincial middle-class personality, whose very rebellion against itself is usually doomed to defeat because of an inherent conservatism, a love for "orderliness," and a fear of "the strange, the exciting, the eternally flexible."

FREDERICK J. HOFFMAN

University of Wisconsin

Invitation to German Poetry. Selected by GUSTAVE MATHIEU and GUY STERN. Read by LOTTE LENYA. New York: Dover Publications, 1959. Pp. 163, with one 12" long-play record. The set, \$4.95.

This is a delightfully unusual anthology of German poetry, designed to emphasize the lyrical qualities of the verse and to protect the reader from the soporific effects of his own rendition when faced with the written word. The two editors have made a fine selection of truly representative poetry from Walther von der Vogelweide to Bertolt Brecht—although the nineteenth and twentieth centuries receive the greatest attention. A brief introduction is augmented by individual sketches of each poet (along with his portrait).

An actor or actress may well be the kind of person best suited for poetic delivery. But it must be kept in mind that actors are used to receiving direction. For this reason, Lotte Lenya's performance is rather uneven; her best renditions are either classical poems—the type heard often from outstanding interpreters—or very modern selections—the type represented in parts played by Lotte Lenya. In fact, the voice of Jenny, in the "Three Penny Opera," is unmistakable here in many places.

The following are, in my opinion, some of the really outstanding renditions: Gryphius' "Menschliches Elende," Goethe's "Gesang der Geister über den Wassern," a selection from Lenau's "Schilffieder," Nietzsche's "Vereinsamt," Morgenstern's "Werwolf," Dehmel's "Arbeitsmann," Kästner's "Entwicklung der Menschheit," and Brecht's "Erinnerung an die Marie A." Walther's "Unter der Linden" is stiff; Claudius' "Abendlied," Goethe's "Gefunden," a selection from Novalis' "Hymnen an die Nacht," and Rückert's "Kehr ein bei mir" are read without feeling or inspiration. Especially disappointing were the readings of Schiller's "Handschuh," Scheffel's "Altassyrisch," and Liliencron's "Die Musik kommt," but these are perhaps too familiar to permit an objective appraisal.

Only two errors were noted in the readings, the first of which was caught by the editors: *weinbelaubter* for *weingelehrter* in Höltz's "Lebenspflichten," and *zweifach* for *zweifach* in Chamisso's "Das Schloss Boncourt." The Höltz poem, incidentally, is read in a singsong manner that reflects perfectly the didactic tone of the text.

This is an anthology which will be read again and again with ever repeated pleasure. It adds life and meaning to German poetry and should be of particular delight to the student who is just beginning his work in German language and literature.

CARROLL E. REED

University of Washington

Stefan George: A Study of His Early Work. By ULRICH K. GOLDSMITH. Boulder: University of Colorado Studies, Series in Language and Literature, No. 7, 1959. Pp. vii + 172. \$3.00.

While the literary world, engrossed in a widespread movement of naturalism, was studying and depicting the lives of the poor, the illiterate, and the exploited, Stefan George directed his searchlight in a decisive way on kings, princes, and rulers. This afterglow of romanticism forced him—quite literally—into a lonely position, which he courageously held in his early years. At a time when the writers of Germany analyzed men's squalid ambitions and raw passions, his poetic voice, crying in a wilderness, remained noble, exclusive, and severely hortatory. The *Blätter für die Kunst*, through which he spoke, was available only to a small number of subscribers by invitation. Its aim was art for art's sake.

Ulrich K. Goldsmith, in his lucidly written and solidly documented book, *Stefan George: A Study of His Early Work*, relates these well-known facts; but he goes on to show that the literary situation toward the end of the nineteenth century was far more complicated than is sometimes believed and that "the climate in which his [George's] esoteric and aristocratic poetry could be appreciated was prepared, if not created by other men and by other influences" (p. 10).

The introduction, "A Poet Aloof," and the first chapter, "The Georgian Protest," are especially valuable for any serious student of George, since the author treats both topics in an analytic and synthetic fashion characteristic of the various literary currents and trends of the time. He points to the *Epigonen*, who expressed pretty sentiments in a conventional manner, and to the naturalists, who knew of the industrial revolution, but lacked the discipline and form needed in its treatment (there were, however, some writers of real stature: Liliencron and the Swiss poets Conrad Ferdinand Meyer and Gottfried Keller).

In Chapter III, Goldsmith carefully traces the influences of George's travels, especially his visit to France in 1889. There George quickly felt at home. He met such poets as Saint-Paul, Verlaine, and Mallarmé. Mallarmé made the greatest impression on young George because the loftiness of purpose of this French symbolist was most nearly akin to George's own high ideals. Goldsmith does not dwell unduly long upon the correspondences between the two poets; rather, he effectively signalizes the essential differences. He points out, for example, that George, in contrast to Mallarmé, did not endeavor to transform his native tongue "into a code intelligible only to himself" (p. 34).

Stefan George was a natural leader, and as such, he "accepted the historic responsibility for a renaissance in German poetry" (p. 34). His goal was not to educate the masses, but to reach a small select circle. He "sought to reform the intractable world on his own terms. This purpose required an effort of will that approached heroic proportions" (p. 37). But even an autocratic personality such as George had to undergo a process of development and, under external pressure, had to share temporarily the *fin-de-siècle* mood of the eighties and nineties.

In the next part of his monograph, Goldsmith interprets George's work, from the earliest poem to *Der siebente Ring*. His interpretations are always plausible and fascinating. He carefully avoids the temptation to give original interpretations, unless these seem justified; and when he finds that a satisfactory interpretation has already been presented elsewhere, he makes no effort to supplant it with one of his own. He develops in a lively and interesting manner his thesis that even in the poet's early work, influenced though it was by the French symbolists, there is the proud consciousness of "his mission as a poet and as his nation's keeper" (p. 3).

Again and again, through examples from George's poems, Goldsmith stresses the point that George meant to teach and to influence an intellectual elite, chosen by him. By the integrity and the magnetism of his personality, no less than by the purity and beauty of his poetry, he emerged as the recognized, uncompromising, and adored leader of his circle. Through the years George received as his due the adulations of his highly cultured disciples. Their circle did not remain stationary, however. Some of his devotees (Derleth, for example) severed their ties with the master, particularly after the controversial deification of Maximilian Kronberger, the youth whom George befriended and in whose memory, after his early death, George wrote some of his most beautiful poems.

A pivotal role in George's poetry is played by ancient Greece, which for him realized "das schöne Leben," the life of beauty. In the description of this Greek ideal of *kairos*, Goldsmith reaches a density of expression which sounds like Zen: "It is a matter of immediate experience, not one of constant striving, of being, not of becoming" (p. 88). Not only Greece, but all of the Georgian themes receive the full attention of Goldsmith; for example, the role of woman and the change to the male Eros.

Some thoughts of Goldsmith which appear in his pages as mere remarks demand further amplification; for instance: "The ideal of the 'beautiful life' is for the few, because it involves an intense cultivation of personality. In this sense George's doctrine can be called humanistic: it is the personal quality and attitude of the individual that counts" (p. 90). Since the word "humanistic" in connection with Stefan George is associated in the minds of most critics with his "Third Humanism," it seems that Goldsmith here missed the opportunity to elaborate. It is perhaps regrettable that George's translations are not dealt with at greater length.

A few remarks of a general nature. Goldsmith shows in his translations of George's poetry a skillful hand. Knowing that it is nearly impossible to transfer to a second language rhythm, tone, and rhyme, he excludes the least important one: rhyme. With this self-imposed restriction, he succeeds admirably in carrying the two other factors from one language into the other. In his German quotations, Goldsmith retains George's own system of orthography and punctuation. It is a pity that he does not explain the reason for this system.

The bibliography appended to the monograph will prove a great help to students of George. In a well-planned appendix Goldsmith enumerates the works of George both as author and as editor. Added to this are separate sections dealing with "Literature on Stefan George and His Circle"; "Miscellaneous References, Mainly in the Field of Criticism"; "Memoirs, Bibliographies and Reference Works." Goldsmith is listed twice in the recently published *Stefan George in Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten* by Franz Schonauer (Rowohlt, 1960), under "Bibliographien und Berichte" and under "Einzelstudien."

Ulrich Goldsmith has written with more than diligence and competence; he has written with love.

LORE B. FOLTIN

University of Pittsburgh

Petrarch's Later Years. By ERNEST H. WILKINS. Cambridge: The Mediaeval Academy of America, Publication No. 70, 1959. Pp. xiv + 322. \$8.00; to members of the Academy, \$6.40.

Modern Italian Language and Literature: A Bibliography of Homage Studies.

By HERBERT H. GOLDEN and SEYMOUR O. SIMCHES. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959. Pp. x + 207. \$4.50.

"Trecento Illustrators of the *Divina Commedia*." By DOROTHY HUGHES GILLERMAN. Boston: The Dante Society of America, *Seventy-Seventh Annual Report of the Dante Society*, 1959. Pp. 1-40.

It is always gratifying to review a book on the occasion of a centenary, and the more so when the celebrator of the jubilee proves to be still very much alive. Jacob Burckhardt's epoch-making *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien* was published a hundred years ago this year. Since then, the concept of an Italian Renaissance has been pronounced dead many a time (as was, by the way, Petrarch himself), only to reappear healthier than ever. If, however, the idea of a more or less universally applicable Renaissance concept has become somewhat problematical of late, it is with good reason. We cannot speak of a Renaissance where there was none, geographically as well as in terms of certain fields of human endeavor. But this situation changes slightly with Italy, and solemn pronouncements to the contrary from certain quarters show only that, in search for a Renaissance of their own, they "went to sea for nothing but to make them sick." Thus, some decades ago, Nordström and Boulenger told us that an Italian Renaissance no longer existed; some historians of science, and some very learned ones at that, went along to the jolly wake. They then, in turn, informed us that the humanists, "supercilious dilettanti," were men who had turned Latin, a grammar-school subject, into the sum and substance of a culture; and they doubted, in all earnestness too, whether humanism was not after all just an easier way for princes and their offspring to get around harsh university requirements.

We take it, however, that the "princes" of that time were absolute ones (alas, no Renaissance for political history!), and that as such they did not need to satisfy any requirements, except the one which still Machiavelli thought indispensable for his prince: to be at least smart enough to choose good advisers. We know, moreover, that many of these rulers were well-educated men themselves (Federigo da Montefeltre, for example, was a product of the Casa Gioiosa) and that they vied for the humanists, as did Francesco da Carrara or the Visconti for Petrarch; or that they, in general, favored the arts. (That there was, certainly, a second thought behind all this should not be astonishing; the arts seem to have felt at ease and flourished in that strange symbiosis nevertheless.)

Upon reading Ernest Wilkins' account of Petrarch's later years, we gratefully notice a wise departure from all such sweeping statements and hypotheses. The volume which completes the author's series on Petrarch is based almost exclusively on the poet's correspondence. Because of the factual evidence inserted, it is not easy reading, and it seems, at times at least, to give rather the outer history of Petrarch's last thirteen years than the inner one. Still, what we get is a picture quite different from the one of a man whose life task was to consist in glorifying a grammar-school subject. This "intimate biography of Petrarch" may not match expectations of piquancy. Yet, in clinging to the facts (and, when they are important, in giving us firsthand accounts in Latin of them), the author has succeeded in leaving behind all the comfortable clichés and in showing us the profile of a man who is, above all, human. This has been achieved by painstakingly piecing together facts—and not by letting the imagination roam the fertile grounds of an epoch that was pullulating with possible *sujets* for a novel.

There is nothing left of this stereotyped and monkish portrait of a FRANCISCUS

PETRARCHA of the Bellini school in Rome's Galleria Borghese, or of that of the Orcagna fresco in the Strozzi Chapel of Santa Maria Novella (and of many a literary history!). Here is an independent man who was called to the courts of Pope, Emperor, and King of France, but who preferred his freedom instead; a proud man who well knew his worth ("Nomine ego cum principibus fui: re autem principes mecum fuerunt") and who, nevertheless, died on a possession given to him by a prince. Here is an intense nationalist who is writing to Pope and Emperor to restore Rome to her ancient splendor, and who is defending Italy in invectives against French cardinals whose addiction to the wine of Beaune (it would not travel) and to life in Avignon he holds responsible for the failure of Urban's definite return to Rome. Here is a man with an iron will and stamina, given up by the doctors in the evening who expected to find him dead the next morning, only to find him writing again. This very same man has been feuding all his life with physicians, wrote diatribes against them, and gave his servants standing orders to disregard doctors' instructions and to do exactly the opposite ("Medicis enim nunquam credidi; nec credam quidem"). Here is also a man quick at repartee, who countered the reproach that he possessed "stultorum omnium amicitiam" by saying that the very man who had spread this rumor had been a friend of his for thirty-two years. Here is a Petrarch with humor who, in his will, leaves his ever-broke friend Boccaccio "quinquaginta florenos auri de Florentia pro una veste hiemali ad studium lucubrationesque nocturnas"; and here is a scholar who, together with his visitor Boccaccio, puts up with the ill-mannered and unkempt Calabrian Leontius Pilatus in his home on the Riva degli Schiavoni because this would-be Greek with his doubtful knowledge of Latin is indispensable in helping them gain access to Homer. Last but not least, here is the Augustinian platonist who believed in the power of mind over matter, thus setting the pace for future generations of Italian poets; a highly refined and intellectual man whose love for solitude was only a round-about way to communication, and for whom the business of writing was not just a therapeutical catharsis in itself, but had an end: "Te in finem, lector candidissime, quisquis es, obtestor..."

This is an intimate biography of a special sort, and one with excellent features, not the least of which is to have put the footnotes again where they belong: at the foot of the page. The five books are arranged according to Petrarch's residences in the last thirteen years: Padua—Venice—Padua—Arquà, with a final Addenda. There is an Index of Persons and one of Works of Petrarch and of Extant Letters Addressed to Him. The volume has been edited splendidly. Two minor lapses may be pointed out: on page 283 a faulty Italian syllabication: *delf-* for *del-* *F*; on page 227 an incorrect bibliographical reference in German: *Cardinal Albornos, der Zweite*..., instead of *Cardinal Albornos, der zweite*.... In the discussion of *De viris illustribus* and of Petrarch's relationship to the arts in general, mention might have been made of Lionello Venturi's "La critica d'arte e Francesco Petrarca" (1922) in *Pretesti di critica* (Milano, 1929), pp. 37-51.

Ernest Wilkins needs no introduction; if need be, the recent bibliography of his writings, published in *Romance Philology*, XIII (February, 1960), will take care of that.

Italianists are always glad to see their field progressing, since it has perpetually been the stepchild of Romance studies, especially in the field of reference works. Thus it is a pleasure to note that the two volumes on French and Hispanic homage studies by Herbert Golden and Seymour Simches have been

followed by an Italian bibliography. That this pleasure turns out to be only a conditional one is perhaps in the nature of the undertaking: bibliographies are an exacting business to deal in, and printing or typing errors, such as may be found in this offset edition, weigh doubly. This reviewer sympathizes fully with the authors; he knows the difficulties connected with this type of editing, in which the author never seems to be able to control his typist. Yet this does not absolve the bibliographer from responsibilities which reference works carry with them. Moreover, in this day and age, the old Romance scholar has become a specialist in a century, or possibly he even specializes in a single author; and though he may be expected to catch irregularities in his own field, he is completely at the mercy of the bibliographers for the rest. This is another reason, and not a very flattering one, why reference works should conform to the most rigorous standards.

This present bibliography of Italian homage studies submits an initial list of some 474 volumes; following these are the single entries. They are subdivided into three groups: Language, Literature (from the fifteenth century to the present), and Literary and Intellectual Relations. There may be some question as to the placing of certain entries in the first group, but on the whole the arrangement is rather clear.

Some irregularities this reviewer noted as he scanned the pages of the volume may be pointed out (numbers with the initials HV belong to the initial list of homage volumes; plain numbers refer to the single entries). To begin with, there are some titles which seem to be incomplete or garbled (14 HV, 113 HV), or the citation of the publisher appears out of context (457 HV). The names of several authors or scholars to whom homage volumes are dedicated show orthographical slips; the most obvious ones: *Rüston* for *Rüstow* (370 HV), *Treitschke* for *Treitschke* (twice 1818, also in the Index, p. 206); others: 453 HV, 97, 748, 754, 957. The German abbreviation for the title *Freiherr* is *Frhr.*, not *F.* which might be taken for a single initial (233). Furthermore, names of publishers (191 HV, 204 HV, 213 HV) or place names (370 HV) show erroneous spellings. There are also some orthographical errors in the titles of diverse entries (305 HV, 343 HV, 350 HV, 431 HV, 446 HV; 28, 84, 119, 143, 492, 664, 748, 833, 1047, 1131, 1376, 1711, 1837). Some of the slips are humorous, but they are slips nevertheless: thus, one of the homage volumes is dedicated "Dem schneidenden Generaldirektor" (182 HV); one of the articles treats of "lessografia" (251).

The authors might also have done well to have been consistent in adopting certain forms (to be fair to them, there is, of course, the chance that some of these irregularities may indeed appear in the original titles themselves): *Quattrocento* in several entries appears in lower case (582, 606, 756), whereas in others it is spelled correctly with a capital letter; once, the diaeresis is used to indicate the German *Umlaut* (*Über*, 1263), in another case, it is substituted by an *e* (*Ueber*, 948). In a Rumanian *Festschrift* title (321) *v* is used, whereas the article referring to it (1654) uses the *u* throughout instead. Here also belongs the use of apostrophe plus *s* in German titles to indicate what in English would be an Anglo-Saxon genitive. In German, however, the apostrophe is used in this sense only after proper names ending in *s*, and then the apostrophe follows the *s*. In the article section, there are several cases where the apostrophe is at times (improperly) used and then again where it is not (948, 961, 1047, 1473, 1501). Here, too, the original authors may already have resorted to this expedient, as it is used exclusively with foreign names. The title of 1235 appears without any obvious reason all in capitals, and another entry (541) is given as "Book Illumination in Ferrara," whereas it should read "La miniatura ferrarese

e i suoi capolavori." From the authors' foreword one may conclude that the exact pagination of the article in question is unknown, but not that the title itself is also unknown, and that, therefore, an approximate English transcription is given. Furthermore, there are some cases where authors' given names have been taken for surnames and have been inserted as such. Thus, we find a Lamberto, Donati (406) who also appears in this same form in the Index (p. 194), whereas on two other occasions the name is listed correctly as Donati, Lamberto (537, 725); likewise, Roretz, Karl appears as Karl, Roretz (527, and also in the Index, p. 193).

One last query as to the cataloguing of Italian names beginning with the preposition *di*: such names in the present work have been catalogued with the article following the surname (115: Ovidio, d'). It has, however, now become the custom in Italy to catalogue these names as they are ordinarily spelled, with the article preceding. Even important Italian libraries such as the Nazionale (conveniently shut down for many years past and also to come, it seems) or the Angelica in Rome have reshuffled their entries in this sense.

The issues taken up here are not intended to minimize the tremendous amount of work accomplished by the authors. Measured against the wealth of the material presented, the shortcomings pointed out are not as important as they seem to be at first glance. One of the commendable features of the work is the occasional indication of the subject matter of some entries which could not be deduced from their enigmatic titles; the most commendable, certainly, is that a task of such dimensions has been undertaken at all. Even with its shortcomings, the work will be a valuable tool in the library of any Italianist.

Miss Gillerman's attempt to give a survey of Trecento illustrations of the *Divina Commedia* has the only major handicap such a study possibly should not have: it relies in its entirety upon secondary sources, and, therefore, when she discusses some illustrations, it is reproductions she has reference to, not originals. A further handicap is inherent in the disastrous publishing conditions regarding articles, even if they are of any worth, as the present study doubtless is. This essay was prepared as a Radcliffe Senior Honors thesis, it was awarded the Dante Society's prize for 1953, and finally, six years thereafter, it found a publisher. (Such conditions are apt to discourage even the most intrepid ones among those who are not suffering at all from *horreur de la page blanche*!) In the meantime, Mario Salmi's work on Italian miniature painting appeared, but it is not discussed in the essay; the author still refers to the older and, it is true, more specialized studies of D'Ancona, Toesca, and Volkmann. This is understandable; no one likes to rewrite. A specialized work, however, like Biagi's *La Divina Commedia nella figurazione artistica e nel secolare commento* (Torino, 1924) should not have been left out.

In discussing the iconography of Vaticano 4776, the author advances the idea that, in the Middle Ages, the concept of Fortuna "preserved a certain pagan quality incompatible with the doctrines of Christianity," and that, therefore, Dante's conception of Fortuna would be unique in medieval literature. We would rather say that Fortuna, not having lost any of her "pagan qualities" even with Dante, simply has been taken under the wings of Christian belief, as it were, has been absorbed by Christianity, has become *ancilla Dei*. She is no longer just the goddess of Chance, as in the love novels of an Achilles Tatius or of a Longus; her qualities, still the same, are now being "utilized" by God. That is, the "traditionally capricious goddess" is still the same, but now she merely acts as "general ministra" of God, and whatever she does is still "oltre la difension de'

senni umani," just as it was before. This (essentially medieval) concept is yet very much *en vogue*, even with many humanists; and although Petrarch (*De remediis*) and Boccaccio (*Amorosa visione*) often doubt Fortuna's existence, it is still mostly as *ancilla Dei* that she appears in their thought, when she exists for them—although both of them, and especially Boccaccio, already tend toward some modification of their views in terms of Renaissance thinking. The old and medieval concept will change essentially only when, sporadically in the fourteenth century first and then in the Renaissance, the idea of the *Fortunati* is taking shape. Until then, even men like Salutati and Pico did not differ much from the medieval concept in their basic attitude toward Fortuna.

Since the paper relies, for the most part, on secondary sources, the author cannot plausibly defend her stand whenever she does not agree with previous attributions of some work (as is the case with the Venetian MS Marciana, Class IX, 276). Although some of the observations seem to make sense, the reader will be cautious in adopting a conclusion which is based on, and derived from, the same secondary sources which the author tries to prove wrong. In the above connection, where parallels with a contemporary fresco series are sought, it seems strange that this same method is not followed more in other respects. There are several pre-Dantean representations in the figurative arts, which could be examined in this respect, such as Pietro Cavallini's Last Judgment in Santa Cecilia in Trastevere (1291-93?), a fresco with the same subject in Santa Maria Maggiore in Tuscania (1206), where devils are dragging along souls to hang them on trees, the marvelous mosaic in the basilica of Torcello, or Niccolò Pisano's pulpit in the cathedral of Siena (1268). Then we know, for example, that there are three great Trecento frescoes having as their subject matter the things of the Beyond in one or another of their aspects, Last Judgment, Paradise, or Hell: Giotto's fresco in the Cappella degli Scrovegni in Padua and those of the Cappella Strozzi in Santa Maria Novella and in the Pisan Camposanto. The fact that Giotto's work seems to be much freer in its composition than that of Nardo di Cione (not *da Cione*, as he appears in the essay), or that in the Camposanto, and also the circumstance that the latter two works, obviously following Dante, have already divided their Hell into *bolge* might allow some more definite judgments as to the origination of certain compositional and iconographical traits. Moreover, conclusions, however hypothetical, might be followed up in the light of more recent discoveries. Thus, for example, the *staccamento* and restoration of the Pisan frescoes after their incredible mutilation in the past war brought to light the original design whose characteristics induced Roberto Longhi to seek their master in the Emilia—more specifically, in Bologna.

It also seems somewhat daring, with the little information at hand, to pronounce definite judgments on a manuscript, as in the case of Paris Bibl. Nat. Ital. 74. To say that the figures are "unappealing" does not seem to do justice to this Parisian *Inferno*. There is, for example, a rather interesting nude on f. 23^v with very good articulation and a certain three-dimensionality for which we may look in vain even in Giotto's works. Furthermore, this manuscript bears at the foot of f. 3^r a coat of arms, two intertwined horse shoes, which must have been inserted at the time of illustration, and which might be examined more closely with the help of contemporary heraldry as to the original owner of this *Commedia*. This in turn might allow a more definite ascription of the manuscript. A further expedient to determine origin and possibly the artists of the comedies in question might also be a collation with other illustrated manuscripts of the time, such as the *Cronaca figurata* of Giovanni Villani, or even some

Decameron manuscripts. The Parisian *Decameron* Bibl. Nat. Ital. 63, for example, which has illustrations in pen and ink with wash color and also bears a coat of arms, is dated by its scribe as being of 1427. It might well be that earlier such manuscripts, given the tremendous initial popularity of the work, could contribute toward some clarification also with regard to illustrations of the *Divina Commedia*, even though both works had literary audiences quite different from one another.

The essay is carefully edited (there is one slip in note 9: Dante und *die Kunst*). Although not an original contribution and by no means exhaustive, the paper has the merit of having prepared the ground for a comparative evaluation of Trecento Dante illustrations which should have been undertaken a long time ago. The illuminated manuscripts of which reproductions were available are discussed in the greater realm of their single schools: Florence, Bologna, Naples, and Lombardy. This means that a wealth of other material is not taken into account. Perhaps at least a list of those manuscripts not available in reproductions, and therefore not discussed, could have been given. A glance at Mazzatinti should have made that possible. Only after a collation, and perhaps publication, however venturesome, of the entire material available can a definite and authoritative word be spoken. To have contributed toward this final goal is not the least of the merits of Miss Gillerman's essay, as she has not "lightly touched the unworthy thing."

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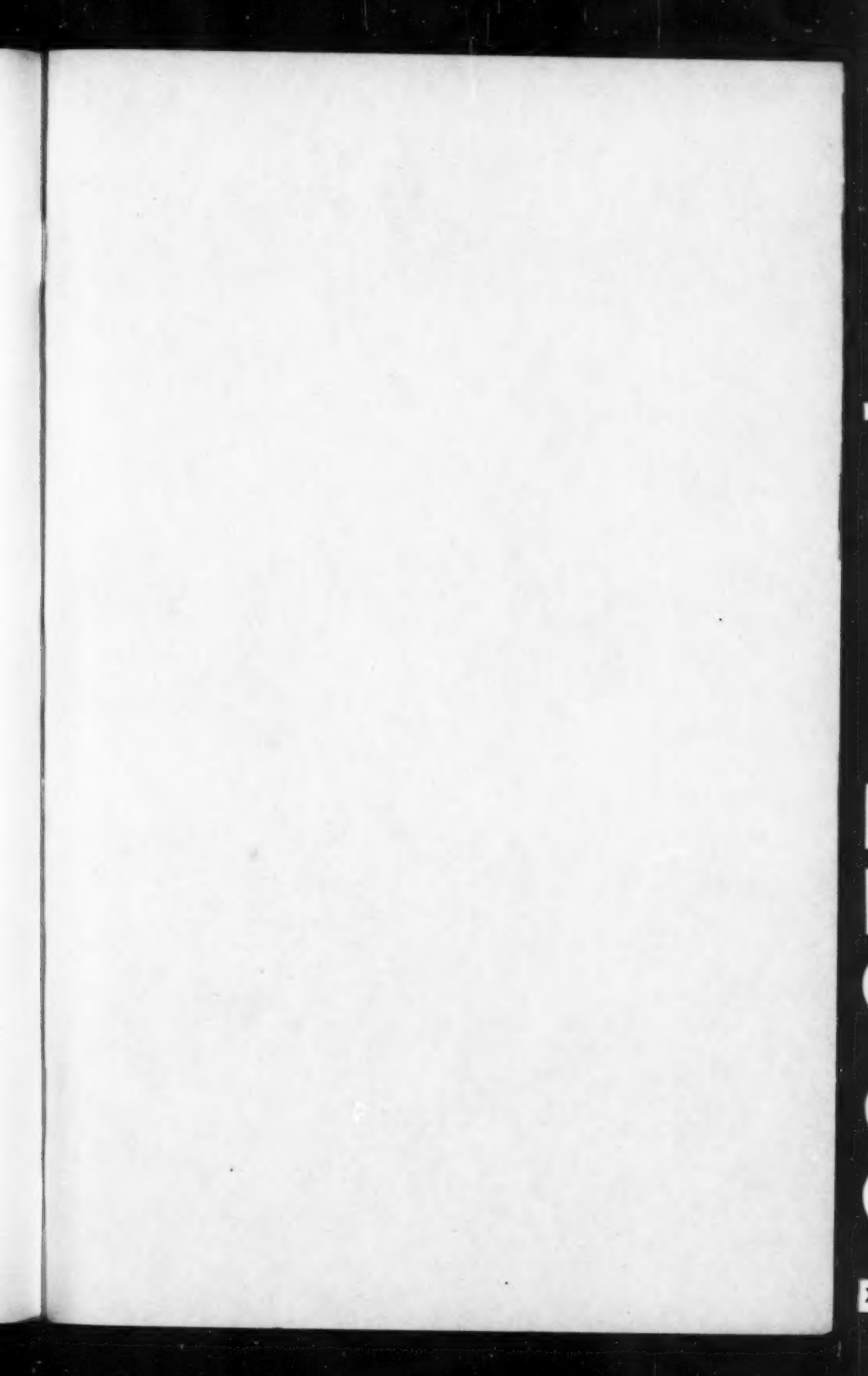
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